

PLUCK AND LUCK

COMPLETE STORIES OF ADVENTURE.

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THREE CHUMS; OR, THE BOSSES OF THE SCHOOL. *By ALLYN DRAPER.*

AND OTHER STORIES



Was it a preconcerted signal? Really it looked that way. Whizz! Bang! books, slates and inkstands were flying. Every boy was on his feet pelting the principal with whatever missile came nearest.

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THREE CHUMS

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By ALLYN DRAPER

CHAPTER I.—Trouble in the School.

"Come here, you! Come here!"

It was Professor Nixon's stentorian voice, ringing out through the big recitation room of Topcliffe Academy.

"Who in thunder does old muffin-ears mean?" whisper Jack Carleton, the boy who sat in the extreme lower left-hand corner of the recitation room.

"Dunno," answered Mat Andrews, his seat-mate, in the same low tone.

"He's pointing toward the girls."

"That's so."

"Miss Caroline Carleton, are you going to obey or not?" roared the principal of the Topcliffe Academy, stepping down from the platform, rattan in hand.

This caught Jack's attention.

"Do you mean me, sir?" stammered the very prettiest of the girls on the other side of the room.

"You are well aware that I mean you, Miss Carleton."

"What have I done?" answered Carrie, rather pertly.

"You have broken the rules of the Topcliffe Academy, for one thing, and insulted its principal, for another."

"I'm sure I never meant to insult you, Mr. Nixon."

"You are insulting me now by refusing to obey me."

"But——"

"No interruptions, miss. I ordered you to come to my desk, and you refused to obey."

"I—I didn't know you meant me, sir."

"Yes, you did!"

"No, she didn't, if she says so!" roared Jack, springing up. "Don't you tell my sister she lies!"

"Nobody knew what you meant," added Jim Beasley, who, just before the principal turned round, had thrown a peanut at Jack.

Now Jack caught the peanut deftly, and, opening it—it was tied around with a bit of string—took out a scrap of paper, which, instead of the usual contents of a peanut shell, reposed inside.

"Let's do it now!" was written on the paper.

Jack tied up the peanut shell again and threw it to Joe Morgan. Joe caught it, but before he could get the string off Jack was on his feet "passing" Mr. Nixon.

"Whew! It's a-comin'!" whispered Jim Beas-

ley to his seatmate, Hen Tucker. "This row ain't goin' to blow over as the others have done."

Now Professor Nixon was angry, and Jack was furious. Truth told, neither of them were acting as they should.

"John Carleton, James Beasley, and Joseph Morgan will take their books and stand against the folding doors at the back of the room, and remain there until I tell them to sit down."

Such was the order of the irate principal given in answer to Jack Carleton's impertinent remark. To the surprise of all present, it was unhesitatingly obeyed.

"Now, then, to get back to where we started," thundered the principal, who was beginning to lose control of himself again. "Miss Caroline Carleton, you will step to the platform and take your seat beside my desk."

Carrie looked at Jack, but as he said nothing, she hesitatingly obeyed.

"This is as it should be," sneered the principal in a provokingly sarcastic tone.

He stepped upon the platform and stood beside the girl, flourishing his rattan. Was he about to strike her? So tyrannical had been the brief rule of Prof. Nixon that every scholar in the room believed him capable of it. It would have been a sorry day for him, though, if he had, for the boys of Topcliffe Academy were not accustomed to standing quietly by and seeing girls thrashed.

"Now, then, Miss Carleton, you'll stand up here and beg my pardon!" the principal shouted.

"I'm not going to do it," answered Carrie, trying to look very brave.

It really seemed astonishing that a man of Prof. Nixon's education should so far forget himself. He seized Carrie by the hair and pulled her roughly from her seat.

"Oh, oh, oh!" screamed Carrie.

"Peanuts!" yelled somebody at the back of the room.

Was it a preconcerted signal? Really, it looked that way. Whiz! Bang! Crash! In an instant books, slates, and ink stands were flying. Every boy was on his feet. They were pelting the principal with whatever missile came nearest to hand.

CHAPTER II.—Breaking Away.

"Down with old Nix!"

"Break his head!"

"Smash him!"

"Wallop the man who dares to lick the girls!"

Possibly Prof. Jeremiah Nixon, principal of Topcliffe Academy, needed a sample of pandemonium as a preparation for the future. Certainly he was getting it now. The whole school was in an uproar, and inside of three minutes the principal was a prisoner.

"What shall we do with him?" yelled Charlie Jencks, who enjoyed the reputation of being the dumbest boy in school.

"Let's put him in purgatory to start with!" cried Jim Beasley. "We can't talk about it with him here."

"Boys, I warn you all that for everything you do your fathers shall be held strictly responsible," protested the principal, speaking calmly, though his face was white with rage.

"To purgatory! To purgatory!" shouted a dozen voices at once.

Now, purgatory was a long, narrow room on one side of the main hall, used for the storage of broken desks and rubbish generally. In a moment they had run the principal into this dismal den. In spite of some protests from the timid ones, the door was locked on the outside, Jim Beasley pocketing the key.

"Let me out! Let me out!" roared Professor Nixon, who seemed to have lost his temper again, and he began to beat furiously on the door.

"Let's go outside," cried Jack. "I've got a plan to propose."

All hands, boys and girls, too, now rushed out upon the broad lawn in front of the school. Jack, who had not attained his position as one of the three bosses of the school without earning it, leaped upon the little music stand where the six boys who constituted the school band gave amateur concerts on Wednesday evenings while the pleasant weather lasted.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he shouted. (Jack was leader of the school debating club, and considered himself quite a speaker.) "Ladies and gentlemen, fellow pupils of Topcliffe Academy!"

"Hear, hear!" yelled Jim Beasley.

"What I was going to suggest," continued Jack, dropping into ordinary tones, "was that we borrow a couple of Mr. Downs' big farm wagons, and all go up to our camp on Mink Mountain. We can take Toby along with us to cook, and Mrs. Sandford, the housekeeper, to do the respectable. She'll go, I'm sure, for she hates old Nixon. How's that, boys? Girls, what do you say?"

"It's boss!" cried Jim Beasley, throwing up his hat.

"Bang up!" yelled Will Edgar.

"I think it's just too splendid for anything!" exclaimed Carrie Carleton.

"I'm sure it'll be delightful," chimed in Susie Simpkins.

"Oh, girls, won't we have fun!" ripplied Tillie West.

"How about the lady teachers?" asked Joe Morgan.

"We will go, too," spoke up Miss Carpenter, who with her associate, Miss Lott, had joined the crowd.

"While we don't exactly approve of all this, young ladies and gentlemen, we've concluded to join you, for only yesterday we sent in our resignation. It is impossible for us to stay here while Professor Nixon manages this school."

"Hooray! Hooray for Miss Carpenter!"

Hats went up, handkerchiefs waved.

"Hi, yi! Won't we have fun!" grunted Toby, the darky cook of the boarding house. "Dere's a few watermillions left in de tree-acre lot, an' dis chile'll tote 'em. 'Sides dat, I'll ketch every chicking in de roost."

Great preparations were now undertaken. Toby cleaned out the watermelon patch and the chicken roost, and emptied the pantry besides. Mrs. Sandford, after a few objections, was forced to yield. Nobody gave the slightest thought to Professor Nixon. Certainly it is no pleasant thing to be the unpopular principal of a school. He could not get out of purgatory alone, and it was determined to leave him there until the time came to start, and then send the key back by Jimmy Downs, the farmer's son, with instructions to let the principal out. This was done.

At two o'clock three big farm wagons rolled away from Topcliffe Academy taking the road leading up Mink Mountain, a hill some six hundred feet high, which rose above the surrounding country at a distance of about five miles from the school. Away went the wagons around the corner of the academy building with a rush.

"Stop! Stop!" shouted a dismal voice, as the last wagon passed the little window which furnished all the light there was to be had in Purgatory when the door was shut.

"By George, there's old Nixey!" roared Jim.

"John Carleton, I order you to let me out!" he roared, when Jack only laughed.

"You'll get out! Never fear," answered Jack.

"Have a care, young man! Have a care!"

"Have a cigar? No, thank you, I don't smoke!" called Jack, pretending not to understand.

"But you'll understand fast enough before get through with you, you young brat of a band thief!" shouted the imprisoned principal, as the wagon rolled out of hearing.

Jack Carleton just caught the last words. No then did he grasp their meaning. He thought it was just because Professor Nixon was mad that he used the expression. Meanwhile the band was banging away at "Off She Goes." Down the hill the wagons went with a rush, and sweeping through Topcliffe like a whirlwind, bringing everyone out to stare at them, they started on the mountain road.

"Say, Jack, that was a nasty fling old Nixey had at your father," said Joe Morgan, after they had been climbing the hill for about half an hour. "If it had a-been me, I declare I'd a-gone back and licked him."

"Oh, pshaw! He was mad—he didn't know what he was saying," replied Jack.

"What's the reason he didn't?" said Joe, giving the horse a cut.

"What do you mean by that, Joe Morgan?"

"Mean what I say. Nixey's up to snuff—y'ain't."

"You'll have to explain yourself, Joe," said Jack, setting his teeth and getting white about the nostrils—a sure sign that he was terribly angry.

"Say, fellows, don't quarrel," pleaded Jim, looking very much disturbed.

"Oh, nobody wants to quarrel with him," sneered Joe. "He ain't worth it. Everybody knows

his dad has robbed the Wixfield bank and sloped. It was town talk last night, and——"

But Joe never got any further.

"Liar! Say another word against my father if you dare!" cried Jack, flinging himself furiously upon his former friend.

Trouble between these three chums had been brewing a long time.

"Don't! Don't!" shouted Jim Beasley.

"Take that, Joe Morgan!" hissed Jack, dealing Joe a terrible crack under the left ear.

CHAPTER III.—The Lone Mountain Hut.

"Don't hit him! Don't hit him foul!"

"I'll hit him if I please. Take your hand off of me, Jim Beasley!"

"For Heaven's sake, Joe! You'll kill him!"

Whack!

"Phew! He's a goner!"

In this last exclamation every boy in the wagon, except Joe Morgan, joined.

"Great heavens! You'll killed Jack!" groaned Jim Beasley. "Stop the wagon, you blamed murderer! Stop till I get out!"

"Let him go to pot!" snarled Joe Morgan.

He gave his horses a cut, sending them bounding up the steep path. This did not deter Jim, however, for he sprang over the wheel and fell sprawling. Up in an instant, he plunged into the thick bushes which overhung a steep, precipitous descent on the right of the road, and disappeared. What was the row? Why, nothing more serious than the fact that Joe Morgan's blow had sent Jack Carleton flying out of the wagon. Striking the road, Jack had rolled over the edge of the precipice before he could save himself. But where was Jack? That's just what Jim Beasley meant to find out when he dashed in among the bushes which at that point overhung the edge of the steep descent.

"Jack! Jack!" he called.

"Hello!" answered Jack's voice from below.

Jim bent over the rocks and looked down. There stood Jack knee deep in the swamp. It had turned out precisely as Joe Morgan had predicted, only that instead of forty, Jack's fall had not been over thirty feet.

"Are you hurt?" shouted Jim.

"No," answered Jack shortly. "Come down here, Jim."

There was no trouble about climbing down. In a moment Jim stood by his side, for Jack had picked his way out of the swamp and gained the solid ground.

"You don't want to stay here—they'll drive off and leave us," said Jim.

"Let them. You an' me will strike across the hollow here and go up the mountain on the other edge."

"All right, Jack, if you say so."

Now, the path that Jack Carleton didn't know Mink Mountain would certainly have puzzled an Indian to discover. Ever since the Topcliffe boys built their camp on the mountain Jack had been piloting people up to it. Jim had such absolute confidence in him that he never stopped to look where they were going, but just followed

on. They were attempting a new road, though, and Jack's mind was pretty well disturbed.

"Say, ain't we going to get out of these woods pretty soon?" demanded Jim, about an hour later, most of which time had been spent in pushing through the thick forest which covered that part of Mink Mountain beyond the creek.

"We ought to be out now—ought to have struck the path at least twenty minutes ago," answered Jack moodily. "We've taken a wrong turn somewhere, I am afraid."

They pushed on for about ten minutes, coming out suddenly at last upon a narrow ledge of rock which commanded an extensive view for miles around.

"Great Scott! We've got over onto Plum Mountain!" exclaimed Jack. "We're miles out of our way!"

"Thunder! You don't say so!"

"Fact. Come on."

"Where to?"

Jack pointed.

"Don't you see? There's a hut. We'll inquire the way."

"Now who in the name of sense ever thought of building camp up here?" exclaimed Jim.

He saw right ahead of him in the direction indicated by Jack's finger a small hut rudely constructed of logs, with a piece of stove pipe thrust through the window for a chimney.

"Whose camp is it, Jack?"

"Blest if I know."

"Mebbe it's the leather man's."

Before Jack had time to answer, the door of the hut was suddenly thrown open and a tall gentleman wearing gray side whiskers and a high white hat came springing out. At the sight of the two boys he stopped short, throwing out his hands in amazement.

"Jack! Why, Jack!" he exclaimed.

"Great heavens, Jim, it's my father!" Jack Carleton breathed.

"Go back! Go back, Jack; you have ruined me!" cried Mr. Carleton. "Great heavens, boy, what ill wind blew you here? We are lost! Lost! Lost!"

CHAPTER IV.—The Leather Man.

Without another word to Jack, his father plunged into the thicket and disappeared.

"Stop him! Help me to stop him, Jim!" Jack shouted.

Easier said than done. It was getting pretty dark by this time, and the thickets on that part of Plum Mountain were pretty dense. Jack and Jim, after a moment of indecision, sprang after Mr. Carleton, but the banker had got a good start, and they did not catch up with him. Crashing through the thicket, they presently came out upon another of those broad projecting ledges for which Plum Mountain is noted. A sudden exclamation burst from the lips of both Jack and Jim.

Below them, perhaps fifty feet down, ran another ledge, and they could see hurrying across it a short, stout old man, with long hair and long, tangled beard. He was an amazing-looking object from the fact that from head to foot he was dressed in rudely made garments of leath-

er. Leather pants, leather coat, even a leather hat, and the boys around Wixfield always declared he had a leather shirt beside.

"The leather man!" exclaimed Jack and Jim together.

In a moment both Mr. Carleton and the leather man had disappeared among the trees.

"Oh, Jim, what shall we do?" gasped Jack, so disturbed that Jim actually thought he was going to cry.

"Blest if I know, old man! What do you s'pose ails your father, anyhow?"

"Give it up, Jim. Come on! We must catch him. He surely don't know what he's about, and if I know anything about the weather, there is a big storm coming on."

The boys now went dashing along the ledge, looking for a place to descend, but the rocks were so steep that they did not dare to make the attempt.

"I'm going down here, Jim!" cried Jack, pausing suddenly at a point where the ledge was more broken.

"Hold on! Hold on! You can't get down there!" Jim exclaimed.

"Yes, I can."

Without an instant's hesitation Jack swung himself over the edge of the precipice, and dropped, catching a tree about six feet lower down, after which he managed to climb the rest of the distance to the ledge below. Jim, more timid, however, lacked the courage to make the attempt. Leaving Jim to get down the best way he could, Jack darted on in the direction his father had taken a moment before. Now a thousand fears assailed him. Of course, he could not forget Joe Morgan's insinuations—even what Professor Nixon had said came rushing back to his mind. Then he remembered his father's strange conduct during the past few weeks; his moody silence, his erratic moves, and unexplained absences.

"What did he mean by saying that I had ruined him?" Jack asked himself. "Why is he here on Plum Mountain when everybody supposed he had gone to the city on business?"

But Jack, as he ran on, asked himself these questions in vain. Suddenly, however, he found himself with something else to think about, for something happened that drove all other thoughts out of the boy's head. Coming out of the woods, Jack dashed on without looking where he went, and before he had time to find out he suddenly found himself treading on nothingness. But for his wonderful presence of mind, that moment would assuredly have been Jack Carleton's last, for he had walked off a steep precipice of unknown height, and was falling down into the darkness below.

"Jim! Oh, Jim! Help!" poor Jack yelled, when first he felt himself going.

The exclamation was involuntary. So was the instinct which made him clutch at a projecting bush as he went down. Fortunately the bush was firmly rooted, and able to hold him. There Jack hung, suspended as it were between heaven and earth.

"Jim! Jim!" he shouted.

Just then the lightning flashed. It showed Jack the cliff close beside him. With a bold spring he clutched at it—caught it, and was just about to

pull himself up, when to his horror a great hairy face was thrust close to his own. It was the leather man. Jack recognized him at a glance. In his hand he held a glittering hatchet raised ready to strike.

"Boy, why do you follow me?" he hissed. "Don't you know that I own this mountain? No one has any right here but me."

Jack's eyes dilated with fear—a horrible sensation seized him—his brain was all in a whirl.

"Don't strike him! Don't strike him!" shouted a voice directly behind the leather man.

It was Jim who now came dashing out of the woods, too late, though, to accomplish anything. Jim saw the hatchet descend, and then came a cry, and the leather man, with indescribable swiftness, went gliding off among the trees. Filled with horror, Jim rushed to the edge of the precipice without making even an attempt to follow the wretch who had done the awful deed. He thought only of Jack, whose cry was still ringing in his ears. But when he reached the spot nothing was to be seen of Jack.

CHAPTER V.—Attacking the Quarryman's Hut.

"Stop! Stop! I want to get out and look for Jack!" cried Charlie Jenks, one of the younger boys left in the wagon Joe Morgan was driving.

"Hold your jaw, Jenks, unless you want to get a crack with the horsewhip," growled Joe, who certainly was in a desperately bad frame of mind.

He gave the horses a vicious lashing which sent them up the steep incline on the run.

"You haven't any right to leave Jack and Jim," growled Jenks, but he didn't say it loud enough for Joe to hear, and as for the rest of the boys—all little chaps—who were in the wagon, they were too much cowed to think of interfering with anything Joe Morgan did.

"Tell you what it is, Jenks, and the rest of you fellows," said Joe, when after a few moments they came within hearing of the next wagon. "If you dare to breathe a word of what's happened, I'll punch the whole head off of every mother's son of you. There ain't no danger of Jack's being hurt. The swamp down there is softer than his head."

Now whatever thoughts the boys may have had after this brutal speech were interrupted by a loud crash suddenly heard, ahead of them, followed by shouts, screams and other sounds not to be described.

"Thunder! The other wagon has broke down, sure as fate!" cried Joe, urging his team forward.

A turn in the road showed the boys in a moment how near Joe had jumped at the truth. There was one of the other wagons on its side with the frightened horses dashing madly down the mountain toward them. They collided with Joe's wagon and broke an axle. Then everybody was in a pickle. Joe's team also bolted down the mountain. Joe and the driver of the forward wagon started after the horses. To make matters still worse, there was the thunderstorm coming up.

"Lawful sakes, girls, what shall we ever do," groaned Mrs. Sandford. "We are too far up

go down, and I know I never can climb up with the rheumatism in my left leg—limb I mean—since two years come 'lection day; and—Toby, you black rascal, quit laughing, or I'll heave something at you. It's bad enough as it is, without that."

"Golly, Miss Sandford, I don't mean no disrespect, ma'am. Yo' needn't have no fears 'long's Toby's wif yo'. What I suggest is to git on a little way funder to de old quarry house near de tippin' stone, an' wait dar till Massa Joe Morgan an' de rest comes up."

They did so. By the time the party reached the quarrymen's camp it had grown very black. Yet for all that, the storm held off for the best part of an hour, and then broke with unusual fury. Meanwhile, Joe Morgan and the boys who had gone with him in pursuit of the horses did not return. Toby was busy arranging an impromptu supper upon an old wooden table, having clung to one of the provision baskets, when the crash came. He had previously built a roaring fire in the old stove and closed the wooden shutters to keep out the rain.

"Hark!" cried Mrs. Sandford suddenly. "For gracious sakes, girls, what was that?"

Certainly the noise was startling. Nearly every girl in the room screamed. It was a wild yell, or rather a series of yells, almost war whoops, heard above the rattle of the rain upon the roof.

"Great grief, mum!" cried Toby. "Dat can't be de boys!"

"It's Jack, Joe, and Jim, of course!" said Carrie. "Open that door, Toby. They must be wet through."

"Say, Miss Carrie, I hate most mightily to go agin' you', but 'scretion is de bes'. Dere's been dead loads of tramps hangin' 'bout Mink Mountain lately, an'—— Good golly! Dar it goes ag'in!"

The yells had been repeated, and louder. Charlie Jenks said something about Indians, and set all the girls to screaming, except Carrie Carleton, who laughed at the idea. Meanwhile Toby had cautiously crept to the door and opened it, thrusting his woolly head out into the storm. No sooner had he done so than with a yell of terror he drew his head in again and slammed the door.

"D-d-don't be afraid, leddys, but it's Injuns!" he groaned. "Dere's a hundred an' nineteen of 'em, wif deir heads all stuck full of tommyhooks and deir belts wif turkey feathers! Oh, my good golly! What shall we do?"

CHAPTER VI.—The Tipipng Stone Falls.

"Indians! Oh, good gracious! Oh, my land! We shall all be scalped!" screamed Mrs. Sandford. "Toby! Toby! Lock the door!"

"Guess dere ain't no lock onto it, mum, but dere's a big wooden bar, what's better," chattered Toby.

His hand shook so he could hardly set the bar in place. Meanwhile all the girls were screaming, and the little boys were not much better. A hoop after whoop was heard outside, and in a moment came some one banging on the door, and a gruff voice demanding that it be opened at once.

Now suddenly one of these shutters had been forced open, and a startling apparition appeared in the breach.

"Oh, golly!" roared Toby.

Really, if the man who thrust his head through the window wasn't an Indian, he very strongly resembled a savage of the most bloodthirsty type.

"Ugh! Ugh! Ugh!" he grunted. "Me big chief! Black man open dat door! I wanter kiss de ladies. Open de door before I snatch you bald-headed! Open it quick."

Somehow this language lacked the pure Indian ring, but nobody noticed that.

"Get out of dat! Get out of dat!" shouted Toby valorously. "I'll defend dese here gals with my life. Kiss 'em, indeed! Take dat! You's ez brack ez I be, every bit."

"Dat" was the toasting fork, which Toby sent shying past the shutter.

"Open that door! Open that door!" yelled a loud voice.

"Not much! G'long!" roared Toby, in answer, planting his back against the door.

It was no use, however. The wooden bar was not strong enough to bear everything. Suddenly it gave way and Toby went sprawling. There was a general scream as five or six men dressed like Indians came tumbling into the hut.

"That's better!" growled the one who had looked through the window. "It's just as I told you, boys. That girl there is Carrie Carleton. Her father is worth a couple of million. We may as well take her along with us, and make the old man pay to get her back."

"You shan't do it!" shouted Charlie Jenks.

Little "sawed off" that he was, Charlie had true grit when it was once aroused. But the Indians brushed him aside as though he had been no more than a mosquito. While one of their number held Toby at bay with a big rusty horse pistol, the leader seized Carrie, and in spite of her struggles, dragged her screaming from the hut. Meanwhile two other horse pistols had succeeded in effectually terrifying Mrs. Sandford and the rest of the girls into silence.

Seizing the basket, one of the remaining Indians swept into it all that was eatable. Then all had a kick at Toby, who, as he crouched on his hands and knees on the floor, presented a splendid opportunity, and hurried off out of the hut into the storm, followed only by Charlie Jenks, who ran bravely after them, shouting all sorts of vengeance as he went.

"What shall we do?" groaned Mrs. Sandford. "Toby, you coward, get up out of that and do something!"

"Bress de Lord, ma'am, I d'n know what to do! Kean't fight de hull Injun nation nohow. If I'd a-knowed dey wuz Injuns on Mink Mountain dis chile wouldn't never have come, an'—glory hallelujah! here's Mars Jim Beasley, come jes' in time to save us all from bein' skelped!"

"What is it? What's the matter with you all?" ejaculated Jim, who, all dripping with rain, at this moment came bursting into the hut.

"Injuns! Injuns!" bawled Toby.

"Indians! They've carried off Carrie!" shrilly shrieked Mrs. Sandford and all the girls in a breath.

"Nonsense! There are no Indians around here!"

gasped Jim. "Get your wits about you, Toby, and answer me. Has Jack been here?"

"No."

"Where's Joe Morgan?"

"Gone after the horses. We are all broke down an' come in hyar jester——"

"Hold on. Whoever has carried Jack's sister off has got to suffer for it. Which way did they go?"

"They took her down past the tipping stone. I followed them that far!" exclaimed Charlie Jenks, who came rushing in at this moment. "Oh, Jim, do something, for Heaven's sake!"

"Come, Charlie, come!" cried Jim, springing out of the hut.

Words cannot paint his excitement. Failing to find any trace of Jack, Jim had at last succeeded in making his way across the depression between Plum and Mink Mountains, intending to hurry on to Wixfield and get help if by any chance Jack might be yet alive. The hut lay in his path, and here he was with fresh trouble for the Carleton family staring him in the face. As they ran, he questioned Charlie. Indians, or persons strongly resembling them, had evidently been at the hut. The more Charlie explained, the more mystified Jim became.

"Where's Jack?" cried Charlie, as they ran on.

"Dead, I guess," replied Jim, "and Joe Morgan is responsible for it. Oh, he shall pay for this, Jenks, now you mind."

"There's the tipping stone!" cried Charlie. "They went that way, Jim. Look out you don't go too far."

The caution was not ill-timed. Right before the boys lay the precipice overhanging the swamp ground into which Jack had fallen, and on its very edge stood a huge boulder so nicely balanced the stone had stood since the beginning of time. It was the famous tipping stone of Mink Mountain. All of a sudden Charlie yelled:

"There's Jack!"

"Jack! Jack who?" gasped Jim.

"Jack Carleton! Look! Look!"

By this time they were pretty close to the tipping stone, and just at the moment Charlie shouted a flash of lightning lit the sky.

"Where did you see him?" cried Jim, for it was as dark as Egypt now, and the thunder was crashing.

"On top of the tipping stone."

Jim felt a cold chill run down his spine.

"You are either crazy or it's his ghost!" he exclaimed.

"Look! look!" cried Charlie, for now the lightning had come again.

It was a strange sight which Jim Beasley witnessed at the moment of that lightning flash. As the darkness was suddenly illuminated, he distinctly saw Jack Carleton sitting comfortably on the tipping stone, which seemed to be swaying back and forth.

"Jack! Jack!" shouted Jim.

Then came the darkness, and all in an instant a crunching, grinding sound. Suddenly the immense boulder, which could just be distinguished, toppled over the edge of the precipice, and went crashing into the depths below.

CHAPTER VII.—The Mystery of Jack.

"Well, by thunder!" cried Jim Beasley, as the tipping stone tumbled down.

But Charlie Jenks, timid little fellow that he was, seemed too much frightened to speak for several seconds.

"It was Jack sitting on the stone! I saw him!" he gasped, at last.

"You go and tell Toby and the girls, Charlie. I'll look for a good place to climb down," said Jim.

"But how'll I know where you are?"

"Oh, by George, you've got to go with me. I'll whistle! Of course, you'll not be gone any longer than you can help."

"But how about Carrie?"

"Charlie," said Jim solemnly, "we can't do anything for Carrie in all this storm; we can't be in two places at once, neither, and I mean to know the truth about Jack."

Ten minutes after that the two boys were climbing cautiously down the precipice at a point a little farther up the hill from where the tipping stone fell. It was tough climbing, and terribly dangerous in the darkness and storm.

"We want to go this way, Charlie," cried Jim, pulling his companion toward the right. "If there's anything left of poor Jack we'll find him near the stone."

Keeping along the edge of the precipice, the boys hurried forward. It was too dark to see much, but then the tipping stone was as big as a young house, as Jim expressed it, so it seemed as though they ought not to miss it. Nor did they. After a little search they found it resting in the high grass at the edge of the swamp.

"Jack! Jack!" shouted Jim. "Oh, Jack!"

There was no answer at first, but after a moment a voice farther on in the swamp was heard, saying:

"I'm here! I'm lost! For God's sake, Jim, help me out!"

"There he is!" cried Charlie. "There he is!"

"Say, that's not Jack's voice, Charlie."

"It must be."

"But it doesn't sound a bit like it. Jack! Is that you?"

Jim's last words could have been heard a mile away.

"Yes, yes!" came the answer.

"Are you hurt?"

"No, no!"

"How did you get there? Where are you?"

"In the swamp. For God's sake, help me, Jim!"

"Follow the light!"

Now it was neither Jim's nor Charlie's voice which pronounced these last words, but another voice entirely, deep and hoarse.

"By George, I'm going to find out what all this means!" cried Jim. "Come on, Charlie. Follow me."

Unmindful of the spongy nature of the ground Jim now plunged into the swamp, Charlie following close at his heels. In a general way they knew the place. It was not a quagmire; there was no actual danger. The light was now before them, and pushing on through the bushes, they made for it. Presently, the light disappeared altogether, and it seemed time to call a halt.

"For Heaven's sake, what can it mean, Jim?" said Charlie. "I don't like this for a cent."

"If it was anybody else but Jack Carleton, I'd give the whole thing up. There were two persons here a few minutes ago, that's certain. Now we can't get an answer out of any one. Blest if it don't stump me."

"Holler again," suggested Charlie.

Jim "hollered" till he was hoarse, but there was not a sound.

"I tell you what it is, Charlie. I don't believe it was our Jack at all," he said at last. "Must have been some one else."

"It begins to look so."

For a good half hour they kept on tramping through the bushes with mud to their ankles, and the rain pelting upon them, but they could not find the rocky hillside down which they had come.

"By thunder, we're all turned around, Charlie," said Jim at last. "What are we going to do?"

"That's what I've been wondering, Jim. Guess we're lost."

"There ain't any doubt about it, unless—why, Charlie! Here we are now!"

Suddenly and unexpectedly they had come out right at the foot of a rocky precipice at the top of which—a hundred feet above them, perhaps—twinkled a faint light.

"This ain't the place we came down, Jim," said Charlie doubtfully.

"By thunder, you were right," Jim gasped. "This ain't the place, after all."

"Told you so. For Heaven's sake, Jim, where are we?"

"On Plum Mountain."

"You don't mean it! Then we must have crossed the swamp."

"That's just what we did. I've been here before. This is the place where I was with Jack."

"Where you saw the leather man?"

"Yes."

The boys now crept forward, and reaching the window of the hut nearest to them, Jim, who was ahead, peered through the grimy glass.

"Great Scott!" he ejaculated, drawing back suddenly. "Look there, Charlie! Look there!"

"What? What is it?" questioned Charlie.

"Look! Look!"

Charlie leaned forward, pressed his face against the glass, and peered into the room beyond.

CHAPTER VIII.—Joe at Luke Lockyer's.

"You'd better not try it," said the farmer. "Best thing you kin do is ter stop here till it lights up. These ere hills is jest alive with tramps what would skin the hide off you fer a shillin', now you mark my words."

The farmer was a well-meaning but overcautious individual, whose house stood by the roadside halfway to Topliffe. He was talking to Joe Morgan in the outhouse under the festoons of popcorn and sliced pumpkin which hung suspended from the rafters. Outside it was raining like

blow. The farmer declared that he had never known such a storm at that season of the year. "But I've got to go back," said Joe. "The girls are up there alone with Toby and one or two of

the little chaps. I don't doubt but they're pretty near scared to death by this time."

Now was the time when Joe wished that he had not quarreled with Jack and Jim. Bent upon overtaking the horses, he had followed them past the ruins of the wagon until he traced them into the farmers' yard. One of the farmhands it seemed had managed to stop them, and when Joe next saw the animals they were in the stable unharmed. Then the storm came up while Joe was trying to persuade the farmer to lend him another wagon, which the worthy man positively refused to do.

"Ain't got but one wagon, an' I want that," he said. "Can't do it no way in the world."

Nor was Joe able to talk him into it. Fate seemed against the boy as he started on his lonely tramp up the hill. Now before proceeding with our story, we just want to state that Joe Morgan, though headstrong, very jealous, and blest with a most uncertain temper, was not a half bad fellow at heart.

"It's a blame shame the way I treated Jack," he muttered, as he plodded along up the hill. "He hasn't done nothing, no matter what they may say about his father. I only wish——"

"Hold on there, young feller! Hold on! Chuck up them paws of your'n or I'll chuck a bullet down yer throat!"

Joe was horribly startled. The shout had suddenly aroused him from his reflections. There, right in his path, stood two desperate-looking fellows—ragged and bloated. Each held a cocked revolver, and, as Joe looked, there were two more men just like them emerging from the bushes on the left. The prediction of the farmer had come true to the very letter. Here were the tramps, sure enough. Joe raised his hands just as they told him to, and—let us whisper it—begged the fellows in piteous tones not to shoot.

Before Joe knew what he was about, the tramps had him by the arms, and, turning out of the road, were hurrying down the hill over the rocks, talking and laughing as they went. It was no use to show fight against four armed men, and Joe didn't try it. They were in the forest at the foot of the hill, now—it was on the other side of the road from the swamp—and Joe saw rising before them among the trees, an old, ruinous house. He recognized it instantly as a place known as "Luke Lockyer's," a deserted farmhouse which had been for years unoccupied, and had the unenviable reputation of being haunted as well. Blazer opened the dilapidated gate and gave Joe a push through it.

"Get in there, you young dudelet," he said sneeringly. "Go straight for the door, or by time I'll treat you to a taste of lead."

They dragged Joe unresistingly through the open door and into what had once been the parlor of the old farmhouse. Here, by the light of a solitary candle, stuck in the neck of a bottle, four or five additional specimens of the tramp tribe were discovered seated on the floor playing poker with a pack of greasy cards. They greeted the newcomers with a shout, and were all on their feet in an instant.

"Who's his nibs?"

"Who you got there, Blazer?"

"Hello, little step-an'-fetch-it! Got any boodle erbout yer?"

They were all talking at once, and began pulling the prisoner this way and that. Joe was too badly frightened to speak.

"Hold up!" cried Blazer, with a shout. "You fellers don't ketch on to the joke for a cent. This 'ere is Squire Morgan's kid. I move we hold him till the squire shells out a thousand or so."

"Good! Good scheme!" cried half a dozen voices at once.

"Got any paper?" Blazer now asked of Joe.

"No, I haven't. What do you want of it?"

"Want you to write a letter to your old man, tellin' him to send up a thousand dollars if he ever wants to see you alive again."

"Wha—what! Do you mean to kill me?"

"We mean to make a stake out of you, bet yer life!"

"Father never'll pay. You'd better look out. He'll have the Wixfield rifles out after you before he'll do it. You'll see."

"Haw, haw, haw! Why, in that case they'll find your corpse," laughed Blazer. "Here, take this pencil and write to your dad, and be blamed quick about it, too."

"I haven't got anything to write on."

"Oh, write on your shirt-tail if you can't find anything else!"

"Cheese it, there's some one coming!" cried Jerry, holding up his hand.

There certainly was some one coming. Outside on the walk the sound of hurrying footsteps was heard, and there came suddenly a woman's voice, raised in one sharp, piercing cry.

"Great gosh! What's that?" exclaimed Blazer, turning toward the door.

Joe could hardly wonder that he was astonished, for at the same instant a number of men, dressed like Indians, came bursting in upon them. Following close upon this mob were two more, bearing between them the fainting form of a young girl. One glance at her pale but beautiful face was enough for Joe. The courage he had lacked for his own defense seemed to come all at once, now that it was needed for another.

"Carrie—Carrie Carleton!" he exclaimed.

And tearing himself away from the tramp who held him, Joe sprang to Carrie's side.

CHAPTER IX.—Tom Makes Trouble.

"Great golly, Miss Tillie! Yo' kean't expect me ter go out'n get skelped? Couldn't do it, no-how. I hain't got much hair, it's true; but what little I hev got I want."

And judging from the way in which Toby placed his back against the inside of the door of the quarryman's hut, he meant just exactly what he said. Suddenly the attention of everybody was attracted by a thunderous knock on the outside.

"G'way! G'way, dar!" yelled Toby. "Kean't kum in hyar—no more stealin' gals! G'way!"

"Open in the name of the law!" cried the same stern voice outside. "Open the door, or I'll break it down."

"Good golly! Dat 'ar's Mars Silas Minns, de sheriff!" gasped Toby. "T'ought I knew dat voice."

Toby did not hesitate a moment now, but his jaw fell, when throwing open the door he beheld

standing outside not only Sheriff Minns, who had come in a wagon, but Professor Jeremiah Nixon, principal of Topcliffe Academy, as well.

"There they are! There are the vile conspirators!" cried Professor Nixon, bringing the ribs of a blue umbrella down upon Toby's nose. "Sheriff, I demand that you handcuff the whole crowd. I have been insulted and abused! I——"

"Hold up, profes'! Hold up!" interrupted the sheriff, stepping in out of the rain. "You don't expect me to handcuff a lot of women and a nigger, do you?"

"Oh, Mr. Minns! I'm so thankful you've come!" gushed Mrs. Sandford, almost falling into the sheriff's arms in the excess of her joy. "There's been a whole tribe of wild Indians here! Oh, they've carried off one of our young ladies, and then——"

"Hold on, ma'am. For Heaven's sake, hold up and give me a chance. Indians—niggers—conspirators! Why, between you all, I'm almost crazy. I haven't any use for none of you. What I'm after is Squire John Carleton, who has stolen twenty thousand dollars from the Wixfield bank."

"Liar!" cried a firm, manly voice, just outside the door.

And, to the amazement of every one, in sprang Jack Carleton with a bound.

"Take those words back, Mr. Minns!" he shouted. "Take them back! My father is no thief! I——"

But Jack was no match for Mr. Minns apparently. Suddenly the sheriff leaped forward, caught the boy by the shoulders, and pinned him against the wall.

"We'll find out who you call a liar, you little son of a bank thief!" he foamed.

"You're one if you call my father a thief!" cried Jack.

For a ghost, Jack was decidedly lively. Wrenching his right hand free by a sudden twist, he struck straight out from the shoulder, sending the sheriff sprawling at his feet.

"There he goes! There's the feller what licked the teacher! Look, Johnny, look!"

These words were shouted out by one of the small boys of Wixfield as Sheriff Minns led Jack Carleton handcuffed across the village green, followed by every idler who happened to see them after they left the jail. Now, this may have been an honor, but Jack failed to see it. In spite of all his resistance, then, Mr. Minns had got the best of him, it seemed. Yes, it was so. You see, Professor Nixon was no child, and he took a hand in promptly collaring Jack after the sheriff fell. And it all ended in Jack's being handcuffed and thrown into the wagon outside the quarryman's hut. Appeals and protestations on the part of Mrs. Sandford and the Topcliffe girls were alike useless. The sheriff drove Jack down the mountain and over to Wixfield straight.

"Don't you do no talking to me, young man," he said warningly. "Every word ye say 'll be used ag'in' ye. I want you to understand there's something more serious than Pappy Nixon's affairs in this arrest."

"Just tell me one thing, Mr. Minns," said Jack. "Do they really accuse my father of robbing Wixfield bank?"

"Now they just do," answered the sheriff, "a

what's more I guess there ain't no doubt but what he's guilty. He's got away with \$20,000, anyhow—mebbe more."

It was a tough night for Jack with that to think of, and poor Carrie's fate a matter of uncertainty besides. In the morning Mr. Minns took Jack straight across the green to the courthouse, and into Judge Bailey's private room. Besides the judge, Squire Morgan, Joe's father, was present, and nearly all the directors of the Wixfield bank as well.

"Here's the boy, your honor," said Mr. Minnes, as they entered the room.

The judge peered at Jack over his spectacles. Squire Morgan glared at him as though he were some new species of wild beast, at the same time taking a huge chew of fine-cut tobacco from a tin-foil package, and shifting his left leg over the right.

"John, where's your father?" he asked, in that deep voice of his which always scared the boys round Wixfield half to death every time the squire condescended to address them at all.

"Now, squire, be good enough to let me do the talking," said the judge, who did not seem one bit afraid of the big man of the village. "John, this is a serious business—a very serious business. If you know where your father is—and I believe you do—you ought to tell."

"I—I—don't know where he is, sir," Jack answered. "I——"

"Stop!" interrupted the judge. "Your father was seen on Plum Mountain yesterday afternoon by some men who were hunting. You are also known to have been on the mountain in company with young Beasley. There is but one conclusion to draw: You went there to see your father. Now tell the truth. Is this so or not?"

"It was all an accident my being there, sir," I can assure you."

"Didn't you see your father?"

Jack hung his head in silence. He could not tell the truth, and he would not lie. Nor did the judge succeed in making him own it, either. The end of it all was that Jack was sent back to jail on a charge of assault brought against him by Sheriff Minns, since they could hold him on no more serious charge. Poor Jack! He was plunged into the lowest depths of despair when he found himself back in the lockup again. Slowly the day dragged by and evening came. Except the keeper of the lockup, no one had been near Jack. It had now grown dark in the room where he was confined—call it a cell, if you wish, though it was hardly that—and the boy was beginning to wonder if the keeper was going to leave him so, or whether he would bring a light, when the door was suddenly unlocked, and a tall man enveloped in a long cloak of rusty black walked hastily into the cell.

"Jack, don't you know me?" he demanded, placing himself in the range of the lantern held by the keeper outside the door, at the same time throwing aside the cloak and pushing the slouch felt hat back from his eyes.

"Father!" cried Jack, springing toward him. "Oh, father! Have they arrested you, too?"

"Hush!" breathed Mr. Carlton. "Jack, I want you. You have got to make an escape."

CHAPTER X.—Mr. Carleton Disappears.

What was it that had so startled Jim Beasley when he looked into the window of the leather man's hut? This must now be told. Charlie Jenks did not seem to be quite so much disturbed by it; but then Charlie had been with Jim and Jack when they visited the spot before, and there were some things that Jim knew which he did not.

"Why, it's Jack Carleton's father!" whispered Charlie, as Jim's head came pressing against the window beside his own.

"Of course it is!"

"And there's the old leather man, too; and—phew! What a big lot of gold!"

Now this was the startling part of it. Inside the hut Mr. Carleton sat on one side of a small table, and that most mysterious individual, the leather man, on the other. Between them was quite a large collection of gold pieces. Mr. Carleton seemed to be engaged in counting the money, while the leather man was bending over an iron box on the floor, from which he presently took out another handful of gold and threw it down upon the table with the rest.

"By gracious, it beats me all out. Look at all that money, Jim. Where do you s'pose it came from?" asked Charlie.

It was too much for Jim. Of course, he could not help thinking of the ugly rumors against Jack's father that Joe Morgan had hinted at that afternoon.

"What shall we do?" asked Charlie, after they had watched Mr. Carleton counting the gold for several moments.

"I know what I'm going to do," said Jim determinedly.

"What?"

"I'm going right in and ask him if he knows what's become of Jack. As to the money, that's none of my business at all."

"But the leather man?"

"Blame the leather man!" answered Jim. "Who is afraid of him? I ain't, for one."

"It's just as you say, Jim. You know I'm with you whatever you do, old man."

"I'm going to take the bull by the horns—that's what I'm going to do," said Jim, moving toward the door.

Now, what the result might have been if Jim had not tried to take one last look through the keyhole before putting his plan into execution, it is impossible to say. But this was just what he did, and the outcome of it was as disastrous as it was unexpected. As Jim pressed against the keyhole, the door, insecurely fastened, gave way suddenly, and sent Jim tumbling into the hut with Charlie on top of him—a most undignified entrance, to be sure.

"Great heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Carleton, springing to his feet as he wheeled about.

But the leather man seemed more startled still. He leaped up, and without a word jumped out of an open window at the back of the hut and disappeared in the darkness beyond. With a wild, hunted look upon his face the Wixfield bank president turned to the boys who were in the act of picking themselves up off the floor.

"Who the deuce are you—what do you want here?" he stammered, very much confused.

"Don't you know me, Mr. Carleton?" asked Jim. "We're looking for Jack."

"Yes, yes, I recollect you now. I—boy, what ill wind blew you here?"

"We're looking for Jack, and I'm afraid he's dead!" blurted Jim, showing just how he felt by his trembling voice.

"Jack dead! My God! Another punishment!" burst from the banker's pallid lips as he staggered back. "For Heaven's sake, boy, tell me what you mean!"

But as might naturally have been expected, it didn't seem to make Mr. Carleton feel much better when Jim told him all there was to tell about Jack and Carrie.

"What had we ought to do, sir?" demanded Jim, when he had finished his story. "You see, we were looking for Jack everywhere, and——"

"Yes, yes, I understand!" broke in Mr. Carleton, in an agitated way. "Perhaps it is just as well you came, after all. Boys, you must help me carry this money down the mountain as far as Greenlee's, where I can get a wagon to take it to Wixfield. First of all, that must be done. Yes, I'm glad you came, for I couldn't have carried this alone."

"But, Jack——" began Jim, when Mr. Carleton shut him up again.

"This matter must be attended to first," he said hurriedly. "Honor to me is dearer than my children—dearer even than my own life. Besides, it won't delay us any. We've got to get down the mountain, anyway, and Greenlee's is the first house we come to. Here, boys, help me put this money back in the box."

In less than ten minutes they had all the money in, and Mr. Carleton closing down the lid of the box, locked it, and put the key in his pocket. Up to this time he had not spoken another word.

"Now, boys, we will make a start," he said. "You two get hold of the rope handle on one side there, and I'll manage the other. In less than half an hour we'll be at Greenlee's, and then I'm ready to do all that man can do to find my boy and girl."

And they started on their way at once. Until they reached the foot of the mountain all went well, but here a dilemma occurred, for the path ended abruptly against a huge ledge of rock with thick bushes on either side.

"Pshaw!" cried Mr. Carleton angrily. "What's this? A blunder? We've taken a wrong turn. Run back, boys, to the place where we passed that big hickory tree, and see if there ain't another path going off to the right."

Dropping the box upon the sodden earth, Jim and Charlie hurried back to the hickory tree. It was just as Mr. Carleton had said. There was a path, broader and better in every way than the one they had chosen. Jim wondered that they had not seen it before.

"I don't like this business, Charlie," he said, "but we've got to see it through. Let's hurry back. We can't be very far from Greenlee's now."

Back to the rocks they hurried.

"By thunder! as true as you live, he ain't here!" ejaculated Jim, as they reached the spot.

Mr. Carleton and the box of gold had alike disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.—Joe Bests the Tramp, Blazer.

"Carrie! Carrie!" called Joe Morgan, in a hollow whisper, peering through the open door.

The door led into the upper rooms of Luke Lockyer's deserted house—the tramps' home, it might better have been called. Joe was in his stocking feet and carried his shoes in his hand. He had pried open the door with a piece of old iron, making as little noise as possible in the operation. Stealing cautiously into the room, Joe ventured to strike a match and look around.

"By gracious! She ain't here," he murmured. "They've carried her away. This is the last room on the floor, and if she ain't here she can't be in the house nowhere! Yes, they've carried her away and I'm left."

And Joe gave a great gulp as though there was a big lump sticking in his throat. The match was out now, and Joe backed toward the door, passing into the hall just in time to run plumb into the arms of a man who, with a sharp exclamation of astonishment, seized the boy by the throat.

"Who let you out?" hissed the voice of Blazer, and the tramp shook Joe as a dog would shake a rat.

Exerting all his strength, Joe wrenched himself free, and struck Blazer between the eyes with terrific force. With a deep groan the man dropped to the floor, falling with a noise which seemed to shake the whole house.

"Hello, Blazer! What's the row up there?" came a voice shouting from below.

"Help, Jerry! The kid's done me up!" groaned Blazer.

"Great heavens! here is the whole gang on top of me," breathed Joe, making a dash through the hall, where he had previously seen an open window. Jim, Jerry, and half a dozen others were at the head of the stairs before he reached it. Without losing an instant, Joe slung his legs through the opening, clutched the sill for a second, and then dropped into the garden below.

"Stop him! Stop him, boys!" came the shout.

Joe saw them coming through the door. There were three of them now. He made a dash for the fence, and vaulting over it, ran with the speed of the wind. That night's lesson had been a hard one for Joe. Harder than any lesson he had ever studied in Topcliffe Academy. When he tried to defend Carrie at the time of the girl's sudden entrance in company with the Indians, he had been "knocked silly," as the saying goes, by a single blow of Blazer's fist. The next thing he knew, they had him a prisoner, with his hands tied behind him, and Blazer and Tim were dragging him upstairs. He could see that two of the supposed Indians were forcing Carrie up ahead of him, but that was about all he had time to see, for he was dragged into a room right at the head of the stairs, while Carrie was pushed further along the hall. Now, Joe did two things of special interest in that room, one wise and one which would have been decidedly foolish if he could have helped doing it, which he could not. He wrote the letter to his father and also one to Mr. Carleton, telling him about Carrie.

How he managed to free his hands, how he found the iron bar, and not only let himself out, but opened every other door on the floor, searching for Carrie, are things we shall not stop to tell. It is enough that he did it—did it with the tramps right in the room underneath him, and we have seen the result.

It was nearly midnight when Joe came bursting into the camp on Mink Mountain. He had gone right past the quarryman's hut, never guessing that any of his party might be there.

"Hello, Joe! By time, we thought you'd deserted!" cried Mat Andrews, who was watching while the others slept.

"I ain't one of the deserting kind, Mat. Oh, I've had the very old deuce of a time. Where's Jack and Jim?"

"What! Don't you know about Jack?" inquired Mat, with a great show of astonishment.

"No. What? Ain't he showed up by this? He and I had a little muss, but——"

"Oh, 'tain't that," interrupted Mat. "Jack's arrested. The sheriff took him and lugged him off to jail."

"What!" roared Joe, so loud that almost every boy in the bunks started up.

"It's just as I tell you. Old man Carleton has robbed the Wixfield bank, it seems, and Jack's mixed up with it."

"Then he shan't stay there, if I know it!" shouted Joe. "Jack is my friend, if we do quarrel! Let's rescue him, fellows! We'll pull the old jail down but we'll have Jack out!"

CHAPTER XII.—Sire and Son.

"Father, father! Why don't you speak?" reiterated Jack, for the tall figure which had entered his cell simply stood there staring at him.

"Jack—my son—how came you here?"

"Why, Mr. Downs arrested me last night, father. They accuse me of helping you to rob the bank," replied Jack.

"Dear me, dear me!" exclaimed Mr. Carleton, wringing his hands and pacing the cell, "this is all very terrible. Trouble, trouble, more trouble. I'd be obliged to you if you'd leave us alone a little while, Joe. I'll make it all right with you some of these days."

This remark was addressed to the jailer, who had just put his head in at the door.

The key turned in the lock, and the jailer hurried away, leaving sire and son alone.

"Look here, father," Jack whispered before Mr. Carleton had time to speak, "before you say a word, I want to know the truth. Why are you dodging about, hiding in the woods?"

"Stop, Jack!"

"I won't stop. Did you rob the bank?"

"Jack, to you I will confess my sin. I did."

"Oh, father!"

"No use denying it to you," continued the banker, with enforced calmness, "nor have I any disposition to deny it to the world if I find I cannot make good the losses of these poor people who trusted in my honesty."

"What did you do with the money?"

"Speculated in Wall Street, and got cleaned out, that's all. First it was my own money, and when

that was gone I began using other people's—that's the whole story, Jack."

"It's terrible!"

"Ain't it? But listen to me, for I want to get to the point at once. Where is Carrie, Jack?"

"God knows, father. They say she was carried away by Indians. I——"

"Indians! Nonsense! There are no Indians around here."

"I know it. I——"

"Hold on! It must be those infernal tramps, Jack! They robbed me last night, I'm sure of it. But for them I'd be able to face the world now. They have been searching all day for your sister. Look here, my son, I've got a strange story to tell you, and you must listen attentively, for your honor as well as my own depends upon it, and there is Carrie's safety to be considered, too."

"I'll do anything in the world you say, father."

"Listen! Listen!"

And Mr. Carleton began a story which filled Jack with the most intense surprise.

Long they talked—moments lengthened into hours, and still Mr. Carleton seemed to find plenty to say.

Twice the jailer looked in upon them, but the banker was not ready to depart.

At length he arose, and grasping Jack's hand, pressed it warmly.

"It's all settled, then," he said. "If I cannot accomplish it, I shall give myself up and take the consequences."

"I don't see what else you can do, father."

"There is nothing else to be done."

"If I could only go with you."

"No, it cannot be. It would expose this honest man to—— Hark! What is that?"

Outside in the street a loud shout had suddenly arisen.

"Open the door! Open the door!" voices were saying. "Open the doors, or we'll break them in—we mean to have him out!"

"Merciful heavens!" cried Mr. Carleton, turning pale.

"Sounds like a mob!" echoed Jack, springing off the edge of the cot where he had been sitting.

"That's just what it is."

"What do you suppose they want?"

"Want? Why, they want to lynch me for robbing the widow and the orphan! God help us, Jack! What shall I do?"

"Open the door! Open the door!" roared the voices again. "Carleton! Carleton! We want Carleton! Open the door!"

At the same moment the jailer appeared at the grating as pale as death.

"I'm afraid there's going to be trouble, Mr. Carleton!" he exclaimed, in agitated tones. "The street is full of people—they are all calling for Carleton! For Heaven's sake, what am I going to do?"

The words were scarcely spoken when a furious pounding began.

"There they are! There they are!" cried the jailer. "It is the mob banging on the door!"

CHAPTER XIII.—"Don't Dare Touch that Box!"

Excellent reasons existed why Joe failed to find Carrie when he searched the upper rooms at

Luke Lockyer's. Briefly stated, the girl was not there, nor had she been for an hour or more.

Tim the tramp could have explained the whole mystery. It was Tim who came sneaking into the room where Carrie had been confined during the time that Joe was busy planning escape, so you see it is not always safe to take things as they seem.

When Carrie saw the shock-headed, ragged fellow come sneaking into the room she was beside herself with terror.

"What do you want?" gasped the poor girl.

"I've come to set you free."

Of course, Carrie jumped at the suggestion. She never stopped to think how unlikely it was that this man should be any more tender-hearted than his companions.

"Will you really?" she exclaimed. "Oh, I'd be ever and ever so much obliged to you if you only would!"

"Course I will," answered Tim gallantly. "You come with me."

"Come where?" stammered Carrie, drawing back with a slight shudder, as the tramp approached her.

"Why, back ter the place we toted yer from."

"Take me home—please take me home!"

"Come on! Come on, and stop yer clacking," answered Tim, so roughly that Carrie did not dare say another word.

He hurried her downstairs and through the front door without being detected, and almost before the girl had time to realize it, they were in the woods, with the rain pouring down upon them in full force.

"Oh, dear me, this is dreadful!" Carrie exclaimed. "I shall be drenched!"

"'Tis kind of rough, I'll allow. We'll hev to git inside somewheres."

"No, no! Let us hurry on."

"On to where?"

"To Wixfield, of course."

"Not much!" cried the tramp. "Think I was born yesterday? Oh, no! I'm just going to run you into a snug little hole I know of, and then write yer daddy that onless he shells out, I'll marry you."

Carrie's heart sank within her.

Frequent pulls at a bulbous black bottle which the tramp carried in the tail pocket of his ragged coat had not been without effect.

Fancy Carrie's situation after that.

All at once a mist seemed to come before her eyes—she was stumbling.

"Brace up! Noner that now!" cried Tom, flinging his arm about her. "Don't try ter come none of yer fainty business with me!"

But a sober man couldn't have kept Carrie from fainting then, for she was gone already. When she came to herself there she was lying upon a pile of hemlock boughs, with the tramp nowhere visible.

She started to her feet and staggered forward, scarcely knowing what she was doing. In a moment she had stumbled over something. It was the body of a man which lay stretched across the path. At a glance Carrie recognized her drunken companion, Tim, the tramp. By his side, with his arm flung partly over it, was a small iron box, which stood open, and from the battered appear-

ance of the lid, looked as though it might have been broken open with a stone.

Was it a ray of starlight which struck into the box as Carrie bent over it? It was a ray of light from somewhere, and it struck full upon something yellow and glittering within—in short, the box was full of gold.

"What can it mean?" murmured Carrie. "There must be ever and ever so much money in that box!"

At that instant the bushes parted, and out stepped a short, stout man, with long hair and beard, and dressed in coarsely made garments of leather from head to foot.

Carrie gave a scream and started back.

"Stop!" cried the man. "Don't you make a move, young lady; and, above all, don't you dare to touch that box!"

CHAPTER XIV.—Topliffe Rifles March to Town.

"Attention, company!"

Every boy registered in the roll book of Topliffe Academy straightened himself up at the word of command.

"Shoulder arms!"

Up went the guns. It was evident from the determined way in which Joe Morgan gave the order, "Forward—march!" that there was important business on hand.

"Stop! Stop, boys!" roared Professor Nixon, from the steps of the boarding house.

"Aw, go soak your head!" shouted a dozen voices from the ranks, as the company moved on.

The boys marched off down the hill and took the road to Wixfield, where Captain Joe gave the order for the "Double quick."

It was the night of the day following the breaking away, and Topliffe Academy still found itself in a thoroughly demoralized condition.

On the morning following the storm, when Jim Beasley and Charlie Jenks, who had passed the remainder of the night at a farmhouse, returned to Topliffe with the full intention of going on to Wixfield to see if they could hear anything of Mr. Carleton or Jack, they were not a little astonished to find that all the campers had returned, and to learn that Jack was safely lodged in jail.

Not that Professor Nixon had been instrumental in bringing the school back to its old quarters in Topliffe Academy.

It was Joe Morgan, thoroughly ashamed of the part he had played, who took the lead. As soon as they reached the academy, Joe called the boys and girls together, and the lady teachers joining them, it was solemnly resolved that under no consideration would they ever again attend the school while Professor Nixon had charge.

After a secret conclave was over, every boy quietly retired to his dormitory and remained there. Perhaps the professor thought he could starve the boys into submission. If such was the case, he must have been greatly astonished when all at once, somewhere about ten o'clock, he was startled by the rush of feet upon the dormitory stairs. He flung open the door and beheld to his amazement the boys go flocking out upon the lawn, each with one of the academy rifles. Protests proved quite useless.

"What do you suppose Old Nixev will try to do

about it, Joe?" asked Jim Beasley, who was first lieutenant of the company, and, somewhat contrary to the generally accepted custom, marched by the captain's side.

"Blest if I know, and I don't care."

"We may be all jailed ourselves before we get through with it."

"So much the more reason why we should pull the old shebang down then before they have the chance to clap us into it."

They were still talking when the column struck Main street. Only a few hundred rods now lay between them and the jail. We neglected to mention that a large party had been beating about the mountains all day searching for Carrie.

It was after eleven when the rifles struck Wixfield. Not a soul was stirring as they marched down Main street and gained the jail.

How still it was! How bright the stars shone!

"By thunder, Charlie, I feel like a burglar," whispered Jim to Charlie Jenks, as Joe gave the command:

"Company halt!"

Instantly every boy came to a dead standstill.

Now the order previous had been "Single file!" and the one which followed was "Front face!" which brought the boys in a line before the jail door.

Joe jumped up on the big horse block by the town pump, and waving his sword, shouted:

"Any fellow who's afraid to follow me to the end, let him stand out now—it's the last chance!"

Not a boy moved.

Joe walked straight over to the big door of the jail, and seizing the bell handle, rang a furious peal.

CHAPTER XV.—The Miser and His Gold.

"Don't touch it! Don't touch the gold! Whoever touches it gets bewitched like me. I told Jack just how it would be."

It was the leather man who spoke.

He stood peering out of the bushes at Carrie, brandishing the long-bladed knife in a decidedly unpleasant fashion.

"What are you shaking that knife about for?" she demanded, and she was surprised at her own boldness. "Do you mean to kill me with it?"

"Yes, if you put your hand on the box, I do."

"It is your box, I suppose?"

"It was my box; I gave it to Jack."

"Who is Jack?"

"Why, don't you know? There is only one Jack. Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!"

It was horrible to hear him laugh. But Carrie fixed her eyes steadily on the man.

She had heard of the leather man many times as a dangerous lunatic who wandered about the woods and mountains, robbing hen roosts and frightening women, and though she had never seen him before, she recognized him instantly—but, indeed, she could scarcely help doing that.

"Don't—don't look at me so!" whined the man, after a moment. "Your eye is like a corkscrew—it seems to twist into my soul. Take it off—take it off!"

"I will when you put up that knife; not before."

"Oh, well, I'll put it up, then."

The knife vanished somewhere about his sin-

gular garments, but it did not better matters for Carrie a bit, for before the poor girl had time to move, the leather man made one leap forward and seizing her by both hands with a grip of iron snapped a pair of rusty handcuffs about her wrists. There was no help for Carrie now. The lunatic had her fast.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho!" he shouted. "I've got you! Get away from me, if you can!"

Bending down beside the tramp, he hastily shut the lid of the box, which he then placed under his arm, and plunging into the thicket, started off at a rapid pace, dragging the frightened girl after him at the end of a chain fastened to the handcuffs.

It was a frightful situation for Carrie. Soon they were ascending the mountain, the leather man going more slowly.

It was all Carrie could do now to keep herself from stumbling, and she often wondered afterward why she had not fallen forty times before the end of that strange journey came.

It was over at last, and she found herself standing before the lonely hut from which Jim Beasley and Charlie Jenks had helped Mr. Carleton take the gold, and now for the first time since they started her strange captor spoke.

"Here we are!" he exclaimed. "I've brought you home. Go in."

He flung open the door and dragged the trembling girl inside, then closing it behind them, he made the end of the chain fast to the latch, and flinging himself into a chair, laughed long and wildly—there was something fairly blood curdling in that laugh.

There was a lamp burning on the table, and as the light struck upon the face of the leather man, Carrie made a strange discovery, which not only startled her, but at the same time gave her hope.

In spite of the curious dress of the leather man, in spite of his heavy beard and wild, distorted features, he bore a most striking resemblance to her father—she could see that at a glance.

"What are you going to do with me?" she asked bravely. "Why have you brought me here? I never harmed you."

"Certainly not. How could you? The devil protects his own, and I sold myself to him long ago. What am I going to do with you? Why, keep you till Jack comes—that's all."

"Whom do you mean by Jack?"

"You ought to know. I mean Jack Carleton, of course."

"My brother!"

"No, no, no! Not your brother—my brother! My dear brother, who branded me as a thief, and now is one himself. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You mean my father?"

"Your father—is Jack Carleton your father?"

"My father is John Carleton."

"Ho, ho, ho! Then you're my niece! Oh, this is great—immense!"

Carrie's amazement was now at the highest pitch.

Could it be possible that this man was her uncle? She jumped at this as a drowning man will catch at a straw.

"Then you will let me go!" she pleaded. "Oh, please do let me go."

"No, no! So much the more reason why I

should keep you till Jack comes. If I let you go, you will only lose yourself in the woods. I'll tell you what I'll do: I'll hide you with my gold."

He pushed aside the table, and, stooping down, proceeded to open a trap door in the floor beneath it. Then, taking up the lamp, he unhitched the chain from the latch and ordered Carrie to descend.

There was no help for it. Filled now with a thousand fears, she obeyed, finding herself after a moment in a low studded cellar beneath the hut.

"Here we are! Here we are!" cried the leather man. "This is my treasury—behold!"

He waved the light above him, disclosing to Carrie's astonished gaze a sort of bin built up against one wall of the cellar. It was piled high with stones, among which gold pieces lay scattered by hundreds.

"There it is!" exclaimed the leather man.

Grasping the iron box by the bottom, he turned it upside down and dumped its contents into the bin. Then, making fast the end of a chain to a stout wooden post which supported the floor above, he ascended the ladder, the trap was heard to close, and poor Carrie found herself in darkness and alone.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Attack on the Jail.

Bang! Bang! Bang! It was the butt of Joe Morgan's rifle thundering against the door of Wixfield jail.

"Carleton! Carleton! We want Carleton!" shouted a chorus of twenty voices.

In less than three minutes windows were thrown up in nearly every building surrounding the common; five had not passed when people began to appear hurrying toward the jail.

"Now, then, fellows," shouted Joe, "this job has got to be put through in a hurry. First thing you know we'll have the whole town down on top of us."

"Hey! Hallo, there! What are you about, you young rascals!" shouted the voice of Judge Bailey, who, being a bachelor, lived in rooms attached to his office in the Barnwell block, which adjoined the jail.

"There's the judge! We're in for it now!" cried Will Edgar.

In answer to Joe's first ring the jailer had appeared, and opening a little wicket peered out. But he shut it again in a hurry, for the shout of "Carleton! Carleton!" which arose alarmed him terribly, knowing as he did that the defaulting president of the Wixfield bank was at that very moment inside the jail.

"We've got to be spry, fellows, if we're going to do anything!" shouted Joe. "Lay on to the door here, the whole lot of you! We're wasting time!"

"Hold on! I'll tell you a better plan," interrupted Jim. "Let's yank up the awning post and use it for a battering ram."

"Good! Good for you, Jim!"

A dozen voices joined in the shout. The awning post referred to stood in front of the post office, which occupied one corner of the big building that included the jail. In a moment all the

boys had gathered about it, and in spite of the fact that it was deeply bedded in the earth, their united strength was enough to root it up.

While Jim, Joe, Charlie Jenks, Will Edgar, and others seized the uprooted post and hurried with it to the door, their companions surrounded them in a compact semicircle with presented rifles.

"Keep 'em back, boys! Keep 'em back!" cried Joe.

Then bang! bang! bang! went the post against the door.

The confusion in the square was increasing every moment now.

Men were shouting and women screaming from the windows.

"T—o—p—l—i—f—f—e! Rah! Rah!" yelled the boys, in chorus, giving the school cry as the awning post went thumping against the door.

"What are they after?" asked Mr. Rose, the fat butcher, who came waddling up all out of breath.

"After Squire Carleton, the bank thief," answered a town boy.

The butcher jumped up on the horse block and yelled at the top of his voice:

"Don't stop 'em! Don't stop 'em! Let's have him out! Lynch him! Lynch him!"

This turned the tide completely.

"Lynch him! Lynch the bank thief!" was shouted on every side.

"By thunder, Joe, things are getting hot!" exclaimed Jim Beasley. "They think it's the old man we're after, and——"

But Jim's sentence was cut short, for at that moment the big door was seen to sway—the next and it had fallen inward with a crash.

Followed by the townspeople, the boys went pouring into the jail.

Now, there was nothing very pleasant in all this for Jack and his father at the other side of the door.

Joe, the jailer, had turned the key in a hurry, and let Mr. Carleton out of the cell.

Jack followed him, and heedless of the loud demands of old Ned Ousley, the town drunkard, the only other prisoner, who was bellowing through the wicket in the door to know what the row was about, they hurried along the corridor to the office.

"Look out, father! Don't let them see you! Oh, what shall we do?"

"Great God! I'm afraid it's all up with me, my boy!" breathed Mr. Carleton hollowly.

He ventured to peer through the window, but one glance at the surging crowd outside was enough.

"Why, it's the Topliffe fellows!" echoed Jack, who had been looking over his shoulder. "There's Joe Morgan at their head, and Jim Beasley, too."

"Colonel Morgan is my most bitter enemy, Jack. He is probably at the bottom of all this."

"Are you coming or not, squire?" demanded the jailer impatiently.

"I suppose I'd better go, Jack."

"You must, father."

"You'll join me at the hut?"

"Yes—yes."

Jack hurried through the corridor with a feeling of intense relief. He knew that the jail backed up on Duck Creek, a small stream which flowed through the center of Wixfield, that the cel-

lar, though underground on the street side, opened on a level with the creek in the rear. For his father to swim the creek would be mere child's play, and once across it would give him an excellent start.

Before Jack could gain the cell, a loud crash behind told him that the door had fallen.

"Rah, rah, rah! Topcliffe! Rah, rah, rah!"

CHAPTER XVII.—The Chums Together Again.

"Look out, Morgan! Jim Beasley, you're against me, too! You'd better kee'n back!" Jack shouted, as they came down the corridor.

"Hold up, Jack! We've come to help you!" cried Joe.

"Don't, Jack; don't!" echoed Jim. "We're your chums. Great Scott, he has killed Joe!"

For a stool which Jack had raised to defend himself with went flying through the air, taking Joe Morgan alongside the head with a force which sent him reeling to the floor.

"You confounded fool! What did you do that for?" roared Jim.

But Jack, without heeding, ran farther along the corridor, anxious to draw the crowd as far away from the cellar door as possible.

The boys rushed after, calling for him to stop, their loud shouts mingling with the cries of "Lynch him!" from the town people behind.

Jack fought desperately—fought against his friends.

Town boys and the Topliffes were turned against one another before they knew how or why, and to add to the confusion some fool rang the big fire bell, just outside on the common, its deafening clangor drowning all other sounds.

"Stop it, Jack. We're here to rescue you!" roared Jim Beasley. "We are your friends."

At last Jack understood, but it was too late. Down at the other end of the corridor near the office the crowd was pressing about a tall figure enveloped in a long black cloak. It was Mr. Carleton, who had been caught in the very act of leaping into Duck Creek.

"Lynch him! Lynch him! Hang him to the big buttonwood tree!" the crowd were yelling.

"Fellow townsmen," rose the clear, ringing tones of Mr. Carleton above the clamor, "friends—for you were once my friends—all I ask is one day's grace—one day more of freedom, and I will pay every creditor of the bank the last penny. I mean just what I say."

"He lies—he lies!" roared the mob. "Hang him! Lynch him! Set him up for a mark! Chuck him in the creek! No, no! Get a rope—hanging is the best."

But Jack had not been tamely listening while all this was going on.

"Jim! Joe! If you are really my friends, now is the time to show it!" he shouted.

"We'll stand by you, Jack."

"Bet your life we're with you, old man!"

The next thing the mob knew, though—it was just as they had seized the banker and were dragging him out into the square—the voice of Captain Joe was heard shouting:

"Charge bayonets!"

Then there was a rush and the ringing school cry drowned all other sounds.

"Look out for the rifles!" roared some one.

Bayonets there were none, but half the crowd thought the boys had them and would use them, too.

In two minutes the jail was deserted and the Topliffes were driving the "towns" through the square.

"Look out for your father, Jack!" whispered Joe, as they tore Mr. Carleton from the grasp of the butcher and another, dragging him back among the academy crowd.

"No, no! Better give me up, boys! It's no use! You'll only get yourselves into some trouble," protested Mr. Carleton, who had evidently lost heart.

"I say yes!" cried Joe. "Run him back, boys! We'll guard his retreat."

"You'd better go, father!" pleaded Jack.

"It's just as you say, Jack, but you must not think of going with me. If they catch me, I am lost; but you——"

"But, father——"

"I am firm, boy! Either I go alone or not at all!"

"Now's your time!" shouted Jim. "Drop that cloak and dodge across the common. They'll never catch you if you're sharp!"

"So be it, then. Boys, I'm off!" cried the wretched man.

The ranks of the rifles opened and let him through, and he disappeared amid the darkness of the common behind.

Meanwhile the Topliffes were driving the Towns before them, using their rifles as clubs, and facing a perfect shower of stones.

The trouble at the jail had developed into a first-class riot, and there is no knowing how the affair might have ended had not the Wixfield militia company suddenly come wheeling around the corner of Washington street with Judge Bailey at their head and Squire Morgan marching by his side.

There was no nonsense about it this time. The "towns" saw that the militia meant business, and taking to their heels, in a few moments had vanished to the last man, while the Topliffes, acting under Joe's orders, stood four abreast, with their rear resting on the common fence.

Squire Morgan strode forward in his rage.

"Joe, you young rascal, come here!" he roared.

"I'm right here, sir!" answered Joe, for his father was really close behind him, and to have moved a step would have been to get farther away.

"What do you mean by this? What do you mean?" stormed the squire, attempting to seize him by the collar.

"Don't touch him, squire!" interposed Jack and Jim at a breath, throwing themselves in front of Joe.

"Do you know you've broken the laws of this State, and I am responsible?" asked old Morgan.

"Can't help it; you'd no business to have Jack locked up!"

"Where's that thief of a Carleton?"

"Don't know."

"You shall suffer for this, Joseph. I tell you——"

"Hold on," whispered the judge. "All this don't

amount to anything. Let's leave the two companies to look after each other, and take these boys up into my office, where we can talk matters over quietly. Carleton has escaped, and they must be made to tell where and how he went."

This was agreed upon.

The three chums submitted quietly, and accompanied Squire Morgan and the judge to the latter's office in the Barnwell Block.

There the whole story came out, and a stormy scene between Joe and his father ensued.

Jack very sensibly held his tongue during this controversy, thinking it time enough to speak when he was spoken to.

"Let me talk to Jack," said Judge Bailey.

The judge's tone was kindly. Jack was drawn toward him at once.

"How did your father get in the jail to-night, Jack?" asked the judge.

"I don't know positively how he got in, sir," answered Jack, "and it wouldn't be right to tell if I did know."

"That is so, my boy. Stick to those who stick to you—I don't blame you a bit. But you can tell me what he came for?"

"He came to see me, sir."

"Yes, yes; but he must have had some special reason."

"My sister is lost, sir. God knows what has become of her. Isn't that reason enough why father should want to see me?"

"Yes, yes. It is dreadful about your sister. I sent a party after her this morning. They have not returned as yet, and—but I cannot talk of this. Your father, boy—where has he gone?"

"And I cannot talk of that, sir. But there is something I do want to say, though."

"Say it, say it."

"Let us all three go. Don't stir up the school matter for one day more, and——"

"And what?"

"And by twelve o'clock to-morrow father and I will be in your office, ready to pay every cent."

"I believe you, my boy!" exclaimed the judge. "Not only that, but I am going to trust you. It's an appointment, Jack—at twelve o'clock."

"At twelve o'clock I will be here, anyhow, money or no money!" answered Jack. "Joe—Jim, you are with me, boys?"

"To the last gasp, Jack," answered Joe, in spite of his father's sneers.

"You don't have to ask me, Jack," was all that Jim said.

Fifteen minutes after that the Topliffes marched out of town with flying colors.

Where were they going?

Not back to Topliffe, for they turned down Dale street, which, if followed, would take them to Plum Mountain by the shortest cut.

CHAPTER XVIII.—Captain Toby and His Troops.

"Clar ter goodness, Miss Tillie, dat am a fac'! He done gone seen 'em! Suah's ever yer born, he seen 'em! But now de boys is all gone, what we gwine ter do?"

Toby, with his white cook's cap cocked rakishly over his left ear, and his eyes winking like a

jumping-jack's, stood just outside the main door of the young ladies' dormitory, which, as the hour was only six a. m., and none of the occupants of the dormitory supposed to have arisen, was a very reprehensible thing for him to do.

"Clar ter goodness, miss, I didn't mean no disrespect," he answered the girls' cries of "Shut the door!" "Dat ar Jim Weedon boy he done tole me he seen de leather man a-draggin' Miss Carrie up Plum Mountain long 'bout midnight. T'ought youse outter know."

"What! what! What's all this?" exclaimed Mrs. Sandford, bustling up outside.

Then Toby had to tell the story over again, and before he finished, the Topliffe girls had overpowered Miss Lott and were clustering about him with a great display of curl papers and dressing-gowns, all talking in high-pitched voices at once.

"Why, it's just too dreadful for anything!" cried Tillie. "Something ought to be done right away."

"If the boys were only back!" echoed Susie.

"I would go after her myself," exclaimed Miss Carpenter. "If the boys can rescue Jack, what's to hinder us from doing the same thing with Carrie? We'll form a company, girls, with Toby for captain, and start at once."

"Splendid!" cried Tillie.

"Just too elegant for anything!" echoed Susie.

"What will Nixey say?" said Lizzie Price.

"Golly, leddys, he's done gone got past saying anything!" exclaimed Toby. "Yo' needn't 'spect no trouble from him."

"Why not, Toby? What do you mean?" demanded Mrs. Sanford, who had just given her assent to the plan.

"Why, 'caze he done gone dranked up two bottles ob wine, mum, an' now he's ersleep on de sofy—dat's why. Lordy, mum! Yo' might fire a couple ob cannon in his ear an' he'd never wake up!"

"Then let's go!" screamed Tillie. "We ought to do something for Carrie when the boys are off working for Jack."

Only Miss Lott objected, but she was overruled. Soon all was bustle again on the lawn outside.

The girls looked positively bewitching in their walking suits. Plans were all arranged, and Toby was stirring about at a tremendous rate.

"Get inter line dere, young leddys! Get inter line!" he shouted. "If I'm gwinter captain dis 'ere company, I's got ter be 'beyed!"

"Oh, let me be captain; you'll see how I'll make 'em mind!" cried Tillie.

"No, no! I insist upon Toby, if I'm going!" exclaimed Mrs. Sandford; and Toby it was.

Twenty minutes more were consumed in getting ready, and shortly afterward Captain Toby and his amazons were on the march. The programme was to go to Greenlee's, where the boy Weedon lived, who had seen Carrie and the leather man on the mountain.

After that all was uncertainty.

"'Pen's upon what the boy sez," Captain Toby declared.

When they reached Greenlee's, the boy was there, but as a vast amount of time had been wasted in getting the wagons from Mr. Downs, it was now almost nine o'clock.

Did we mention the wagons before?

Of course you don't suppose for a moment that fat Mrs. Sanford could have walked all the way from Topcliffe to Greenlee's.

Why, she was so used up as it was that she declared she could not stir another step!

"Nebber mind! We'll get on widout her!" said Toby, as the second start was made.

The girls were in single file now, with Toby and the teachers in advance.

They were steering straight for Plum Mountain and by Toby's side walked the boy who had seen Carrie and the leather man the previous night.

"Oh, Tillie! ain't it just dreadful!" exclaimed Susie. "What would you do, dear, if you were in Carrie's place?"

"Do! I'd scratch his eyes out!"

"Pshaw! You are very brave! Why didn't you scratch the Indians' eyes out when they captured Carrie at the hut? You were just as much scared as any one else."

"Susie, it ain't so. I—oh, dear me! What shall I do now?"

"What's the matter?"

"My—there's something broken—my skirt's coming-off, now there!"

"That's nothing. Let's slip into the bushes and I'll pin it. We'll catch up with the other girls in a couple of minutes. Say, Tillie, look at Toby, how pompous he is marching at the head of so many girls."

"Oh, pshaw! Never mind Toby—I want to fix my skirt."

They hurried into the bushes by the roadside, but scarcely had the alder branches closed behind them than Toby was startled by a succession of shrill screams.

"The leather man! Help! Help! Toby! Toby! The leather man!"

"Good golly! Wha's all dis?" cried Toby, stopping short.

"It's the girls—it's Tillie and Susie! There—there!" screamed Lizzie Price.

It was broad daylight, and there were too many eyes upon him to render it safe for Toby to act the coward now.

"Come on! Who's afraid?" he shouted.

Nobody seemed anxious to move, though, so Toby and the boys broke into the bushes themselves, stumbling upon Tillie and Susie before they had gone ten steps.

The girls were clutching one another's hands, and screaming:

"Toby! There he is!"

"Good golly, so he be!" echoed Toby, for his eyes rested upon the singular figure of the leather man leaning against a tree with something that looked like a bundle of old clothes at his feet.

"Hain't he teched yer?" demanded Toby.

"No! No!"

"Golly! what yer scart of, den? Hello, dere, boss! Hello!"

No answer from the leather man. With this head bowed, he stood there motionless against the tree.

"Why don't yer speak when a ge'm'n 'dresses yer?" demanded Toby, mustering up courage to advance a few steps farther. "Hain't yer got no manners? Hain't—good golly! What's dat?"

Toby jumped back fully five feet, and the girls

gave another spring, for what they had taken for the bundle of clothes at the foot of the tree suddenly rose up and faced them.

"Mistah Carleton!" cried Toby, who knew the banker well.

"Hush!" whispered Mr. Carleton, who was deathly white, raising his finger and speaking wildly. "Hush! Don't disturb him! Don't you see he's dead—dead—dead? And I'm going to die, too!"

He suddenly raised a cocked revolver and pressed it against his pallid brow.

CHAPTER XIX.—Carrie's Troubles Thicken.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Ha, ha, ha!"

When the leather man laughed, it seemed as though he meant all the world to hear him.

Poor Carrie in the cellar strained her ears to catch the sound as it died away in the distance.

And though the laugh was fiendish, Carrie half wished she might hear it further, for it is a horrible thing to find one's self a prisoner in darkness alone.

An hour had passed since the leather man dropped the poor girl into the cellar and left her there chained to a post.

During all that time Carrie scarcely dared to move, for the strange man above her kept tramping up and down, and every now and then would open the cellar door and shout some ridiculous nonsense or other, winding up in every case with that dreadful laugh.

"Ha, ha! Ho, ho! Ha, ha!"

At last he was heard to open the door and start down the mountain, still laughing as he went.

"Oh, I can't stay here! I can't stay here!" breathed the unfortunate girl, in an agony of terror.

And in the first moments of this rush of fear she even called to the leather man, begging him to come back, but got no answer, of course, for he was far out of hearing.

Not that the girl was so much afraid of the dark, or thought much upon her sad situation. It was rats she feared, and though there was probably not a rat on the mountain, her imagination pictured them all around her, and she struggled desperately to get free. It amounted to nothing, though, for the chain held her fast.

An hour of agony passed, and morning dawned before Carrie, from sheer fatigue, began to quiet down.

Not that she knew it was morning, for no light penetrated into the cellar. As soon as calmness came, common sense began to return with it, and she set about doing what she ought to have done in the first place—to try, in a sensible way, to get free.

How was the chain fastened?

This was the first question.

Her struggles had only resulted in winding it so tight around the post that she could scarcely move; but now she unwound herself carefully, thinking what she was about, which she had not done before, until at last she had it out to its full length.

Next she did what she ought to have done in

the first place: followed the chain up to its end to see in what manner it was fastened to the post.

This brought a discovery which sent hope thrilling through poor Carrie's heart, for the chain was only fastened by an ordinary hook passed through one of the links, precisely as a madman might have been expected to fasten it. In a second Carrie had unhooked it and was free.

"What a fool I was not to do that before!" breathed the girl. "It's all right now. All I've got to do is to find the stairs and get out."

She groped for the first step, and presently discovered it. Cautiously ascending, she managed with some difficulty to raise the trap, and in a moment found herself standing in the glorious sunlight of the room above.

Be very sure she lost no time now. Without even stopping to close the trap, she hurried out, and looked about for the path leading to the valley beneath.

It was right before her, trodden hard by the feet of the leather man, who had been ascending and descending for years.

"If only I don't meet him on the way," thought Carrie, "I ought to be able to reach the school inside of two hours. I wonder if there is any one there, or if they are all on Mink Mountain still?"

Without wasting a moment, however, she started down the slope.

Poor Carrie! Her troubles were not yet over.

For the first two minutes her way lay over barren ledges, from which she could see to a great distance all about her; this passed, she plunged into a strip of forest where it was almost as dark as night.

It was right here that Carrie suddenly became aware of the disagreeable fact that she was not alone.

Somewhere voices could be heard using language anything but elegant.

Naturally the girl thought of the tramps, and, frightened beyond all telling, sprang aside into the bushes on the right, only to find too late that she had made a fatal mistake, and run right into the lion's mouth.

There they were—Jerry Blazer and all the rest. They seemed to rise up before her like so many pecters, with their red, bloated faces and their rags.

"Holy smoke! It's ther gal again!" cried Blazer, and then, to Carrie's amazement, there stood Tim with a dirty cloth wound round his head, his face as pale as death, but still very much alive.

"Grab her, boys! Grab her!" he shouted, as Carrie started to run. "I'll bet you what you like that she knows where old leather's hid his gold."

They were upon Carrie before she knew it, Blazer caught her by the waist, and Tim, who certainly exhibited a good deal of strength for a dead man, seized her hands and tied them behind her.

"Let's get her back and make her tell what she knows. No fear of leather now, nor no chance of getting the secret out of him, either—dead men tell no tales."

"That's what's the matter!" echoed Blazer, as they dragged poor Carrie out into the path.

CHAPTER XX.—Just in Time.

"Stop! Stop! Oh, Lordy, Massa Carleton! What yo' gwinter do?"

It was really brave in Toby, considering the fear he felt of a cocked revolver, to jump forward and wrench the weapon from Mr. Carleton's hand in the way he did.

As for Tillie and Susie, they could only stand still and scream, and as their screams brought all the girls into the bushes, the secluded wood was crowded in a moment.

Meanwhile, the leather man never moved nor raised his head, but just stood there leaning against the tree as the girls had first discovered him, with a tiny stream of blood upon his leather coat in the region of the heart.

"What did you do that for, you black rascal?" cried Mr. Carleton furiously. "Give me back that pistol. I'm going to kill myself. Give it back, I say!"

"Not much, boss!" answered Toby, at the same time giving the revolver a fling off into the bushes. "These ere leddys is in my charge, an' don' yo' forget it. Thar hain't gwinter be no killin' did hyar!"

Mr. Carleton groaned and pressed his hands to his forehead.

"Oh, my God! Why did you do it?" he murmured. "Why didn't you let me kill myself? Don't you see they have killed my brother? There is no help for me now. He would have given me money; as it is, I am lost—lost!"

"Mr. Carleton—Mr. Carleton, be a man, sir!" exclaimed Miss Carpenter, moving forward and taking the banker by the arm. "Remember, you have a daughter. Think of Carrie! She is in great danger. There is your son, too, and you do not want to forget yourself."

"Carrie! Yes, yes! Carrie! What of her?" exclaimed the banker, controlling himself with a desperate effort. "Has she been found?"

"She has not. We are on the way now to the hut where she is said to be confined."

"What hut? Oh, I am almost crazy!"

"The leather man's. That man there!"

"She is not at the hut. She cannot be there."

"I bet yer she is, mister. I seen the leather man a-haulin' on her up the mountain last night!" cried the boy, Weedon.

"Can this be possible?"

"It am a col' fac', boss!" put in Tobey. "Say, what's de matter wif de leather man? Is he really dead?"

"Can't you see for yourself? He is dead and cold, tied to the tree."

"Golly! Who killed him?"

"I don't know—I suspect the tramps who have been prowling about these woods disguised in the Indian costumes they stole from the show which was at Wixfield some weeks ago. You see him just as I found him. Oh, James! Oh, my poor brother! Yours has been a strange life!"

"Was he really your brother, Mr. Carleton?" Miss Carpenter asked.

"Yes, yes! But I can't stay here. We can do nothing for him. Let us hurry on to the hut and see about my daughter. There is something else to be attended to there besides—something of the highest importance. Come—come!"

"Specs we'd better go," said Toby, who had been examining the body of the leather man, which was bound to the tree with a stout rope.

He had been tied first and stabbed to the heart afterward, it seemed. Certainly it looked like more of the villainous work of the tramps. If Carrie had been there, she would have suspected Tim.

"Yes—yes! Let us go at once," said Mr. Carleton. "I shall be caught by the sheriff, probably, but no matter. Better be in the penitentiary for life than live as I have had to live for the last few days."

He kept close to Miss Carpenter, as they now started again on their way up the mountain.

The kind-hearted teacher would have liked much to have said something to comfort him, but as Mr. Carleton maintained a moody silence, she did not like to speak.

"Faster—let us go faster!" exclaimed Mr. Carleton anxiously, when about halfway up Plum Mountain they gained a level stretch. "If my poor girl is in the hut—ha! what is this?"

The sound of a drum had suddenly made itself heard, and mingled with it came the shrill notes of a fife, tuned to "The Girl I Left Behind Me."

"Hark!" cried Mr. Carleton, raising his hand suddenly. "There are a lot of people coming up the path that leads to Wixfield. Oh, God! what shall I do?"

"Stand your ground like a man, sir," said Miss Carpenter. "If you are innocent, you need have no fear."

"Ah! there is just the trouble!" groaned the banker. "I am guilty—guilty! I have robbed the widow and the orphan, but I would have restored all if—oh, Heaven! It is Jack!"

The rattle of the drum and the tooting of the fife had grown louder while he was speaking, and now a line of gleaming rifle barrels appeared, carried on the shoulders of a company of boys.

"Golly! It's dem free rapscllions—Jack, Jim and Joe!" shouted Toby. "Now we's all serene."

"Wait—they don't see us yet!" said Mr. Carleton. "I think—yes, they do, too! Oh, Jack! Jack!"

For Jack had suddenly dashed forward and thrown himself into his father's arms.

"Father! Father! You mustn't stay here an instant!" he exclaimed excitedly. "Mr. Downs, the sheriff, and his searching party are right behind us. You want to get out of this at once."

"No, John, I will not go," replied Mr. Carleton, more calmly than he had yet spoken. "Your uncle is dead—murdered. All chance of assistance from him has vanished, I fear; but be that as it may, I am determined to face the music like a man."

Meanwhile, in the leather man's hut poor Carrie was having an exciting time of it, to say the least. Positively the poor girl was past screaming. Indeed, she was so dazed with all that had come upon her that she scarcely realized the lapse of time, and was amazed when Tim, looking at the sun, announced that it must be almost ten, adding that they had better make a move if they were going at all.

Of course she had told about the gold. How could she help it?

Now, a start was made, and at last they reach-

ed the leather man's hut, where the attention of all was attracted immediately to the open trap, just as might have been supposed.

The tramps tied her to the sink and all went down together. There was their great mistake.

Tied by the waist and arms, there was nothing to hinder Carrie from using her feet, and no sooner had the last tramp disappeared down the trap than she kicked the door back into place, and without the least difficulty, managed to shoot the bolt.

"Confound you, gal! What you doin'?" roared Tim's voice from the cellar.

Bang! bang! bang!

In an instant blows were showered on the trap thick and fast.

"Help, help!" screamed Carrie, whose ears had at that moment caught other and more welcome sounds.

Before she could pronounce the word the third time, the door was thrown violently open, and in rushed a host of friends.

"Father! Jack! Oh, father!" screamed the poor girl, and after that she knew nothing until she found herself supported by her father, with the hut crowded to its utmost capacity; so full, in fact, that Sheriff Downs and a number of others had to stand outside the door.

"Thank God that you are safe, my child!" exclaimed Mr. Carleton. "This moment is worth more to me than all your uncle's gold!"

"Gold—the cellar is full of gold, father!" gasped Carrie, raising up.

"You don't mean it, child! The noise we heard, then——"

"The tramps are down there, father!"

"Ah! Then it was they who tied you. I see! I see! Jack!"

But Jack had turned and was facing the rifles. Raising his hand, he waved it frantically.

"The gold's in the cellar, boys! Let's have it!" he shouted.

CHAPTER XXI.—Conclusion.

"Ten minutes to twelve, Judge," said Squire Morgan, looking at his watch, "and no sign of that young rascal yet."

"That's all right, Morgan. Give the boy time. He'll be on hand, I'm sure."

"I don't believe it," growled the lawyer. "Like father, like son."

"Jack is smart. You can't deny that."

"Oh, no. I don't deny it. He's too smart for you, Judge. I almost wish my boy Joe was like him, instead of the milksop he is to write that letter. I'll never forgive him for that."

And the squire brought his fist down hard upon an open letter which lay upon the judge's desk, which had come in the morning's mail.

Suddenly the loud beating of a drum and the shrill notes of a fife made themselves heard.

"By George, Morgan, it's the boys as sure as you live!" cried Judge Bailey, stepping to the window and looking out.

"Just twelve o'clock!" exclaimed the judge, as the town bell rang out the noon hour. "Jack Carleton has kept his word."

Two minutes later and the judge's office was

full of people. Even the stairs of the Barnwell Block were jammed, and the crowd extended into the street.

Very pale, but very determined, Mr. Carleton separated himself from the others, and stepped up to Judge Bailey's desk, throwing down a folded paper upon it.

"Judge," he said, "take that and hold it, using the proceeds for the benefit of the bank creditors. I am ready to give myself up now, but no one will lose a dollar, thanks to the energy of these boys."

Judge Bailey took up the paper, and opening it, proceeded to scan its contents for a few moments in silence.

"Well, well, well! This is wonderful!" he exclaimed.

"What—what is it?" demanded the squire.

"Oh, nothing much, only the will of that strange character, the leather man," replied the judge. "He turns out to be Carleton's brother, and leaves him a good hundred thousand, that's all."

Of course, there was no more talk of arresting Mr. Carleton now.

One hundred thousand dollars to meet an obligation of \$20,000 leaves a snug little margin. Mr. Carleton was still very far from being the ruined man he had supposed.

In a day's time every obligation was settled for. Judge Bailey took an assignment of Mr. Carleton's claims against his brother's estate, and personally advanced the money to pay off the bank creditors in full.

Equally, of course, there was no use trying to keep any part of the matter secret, so on the following Friday the Wixfield Free Press came out with a full account of the whole affair.

It told how James Carleton, better known as the leather man, had years before robbed his brother in the part of the country from which they had originally come; how, later, he had become a perfect miser, and yet a miser with methods, as certain shrewd investments showed, for the gold in the bin formed but a small part of the estate, which turned out to amount to over \$200,000 when all was disclosed.

Of course, the sheriff would not let Mr. Carleton touch the gold after the tramps were captured, as they speedily were—and it was known that the leather man was dead.

Fortunately, however, the will of the leather man was found in an old desk, which, as it left everything to the banker, enabled Jack to keep his appointment, as we have shown.

Tim, Blazer and Jerry went to the penitentiary for long terms. The former, narrowly escaped the gallows, felt pretty well satisfied with his sentence, too, for he confessed to having killed the leather man, but claimed that the crime had been committed in self-defense, and that when he tied the man to the tree he was not dead.

As there were no witnesses, and Carrie's testimony showed that the leather man had nearly killed Tim earlier in the night, the tramp got the benefit of the doubt, and so escaped the full penalty of his crime.

Days passed, and changes took place at Topcliffe. Professor Nixan was shown to be a dissipated tyrant, and was dismissed in disgrace. Shortly after that there was a meeting of the

trustees of Topcliffe Academy, and who do you suppose was chosen principal in Professor Nixan's place?

Strange as it may appear, it was Mr. Carleton. The man was a college graduate, and perfectly well qualified for the position. His usefulness as a bank president and a business man had departed; and he had to turn his hand to something else. Besides, Squire Morgan stood his friend, and would have it so, and as the squire owned a half interest in the academy corporation, his wishes went a great way.

"I feel that I ought not to take it, Jack," said Mr. Carleton to his son, on the evening after the choice was announced.

"I think you ought, father. The boys all want it so, and as for the girls, I haven't heard a dissenting voice among them."

"Well, well, I suppose I must yield, but after what has occurred——"

"No matter about that, father. Don't let the subject ever be alluded to again, though before we drop it I would like to ask you a question or two."

"Ask what you like, Jack; ask what you like."

"Did you know the leather man was your brother all the years he went tramping around the country?"

"Certainly, Jack. But don't let us talk of him. After I buried poor Jim in our family lot, I made up my mind never to speak of him again. You think I profited by his death, boy—I want you to understand that the money I received was less than half of my share of our father's estate out of which he wronged me, and—but there! I'll say no more. Let the dead rest in peace."

"Yes, but one word, father. Why did uncle come here?"

"I don't know, Jack—never did. He was a strange mortal. No man could fathom him. Look at the worthless stones found mixed with the gold in the bin; look at the way he treated Carrie—that tells the tale."

"Then he was crazy?"

"Of course. I knew it. Still, when I found myself in trouble, I resolved to hunt him up and beg his help. And it is only just to him to say that he gave it, Jack. There was \$20,000 in that box which young Beasley helped me carry away from the hut."

"How came you to lose that box, father?"

"How? Why, we missed the road, and I set the box down to go after the boys. No sooner had I turned my back than that wretched tramp who was hanging near seized it and made off. I chased him, but did not catch him, and then—but there, I am not going to talk more."

Nor did he ever again on that subject, so there is nothing left for us but to bring our story to an end. In due time Jack, Jim and Joe graduated with equal honors. Later Jack married Tillie West, and Joe Jack's sister Carrie. Jim, jilted by Susie Simpkins, remains an old bachelor still.

Next week's issue will contain "THE DRUMMER BOY'S SECRET; or, OATH-BOUND ON THE BATTLEFIELD."

CURRENT NEWS

NEW COUNTERFEIT \$10 NOTE

The Secret Service Division of the Treasury has issued a warning regarding a new counterfeit \$10 Federal Reserve note, destined as follows:

"On the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City, Missouri; red letter 'B'; W. G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury; John Burke, Treasurer of the United States; portrait of Jackson.

"This counterfeit is printed from photographic plates, and is clearly the work of an amateur. The bill is about a half inch shorter than the genuine, and the face is brown instead of black, and the back blue instead of green. The number of the specimen at hand is J7509902A. It is a poor counterfeit."

INFANT LOCKED IN ICEBOX

Joseph Petrowski, although armed with an axe, was badly lacerated by a mirror his wife held when the police forced their way into the house at No. 323 Henderson street, Jersey City. The pair resented the intrusion and attacked the police, who had to use their clubs to subdue them. The man and the woman were tied with ropes and taken to the police station.

When the police searched the flat they found a six-months old baby in an ice box. A fourteen-year-old girl was in a closet. Three other children were running about the rooms. Two of the children were sent to a hospital, where they are in a critical condition from whooping cough.

Petrowski and his wife were sentenced to six months in the penitentiary for cruelty to children. Judge O'Driscoll suspended sentence on the woman.

DRY WAVE SCARES JAMAICA

Thousands of residents of Jamaica, the home of Jamaica rum, have united in a protest to the Government and legislative council against prohibition, State control of the liquor trade or alteration of the present licensing system. A measure has been introduced in the Legislature by the Government providing for State control of the trade after the legislative council had been asked to consider also the questions of prohibition and licensing.

Those opposed argued in a memorial to the Government that the manufacture of rum as a by-product of sugar had been carried on in the island for hundreds of years and formed an important industry which would be seriously affected if prohibition were imposed. They objected also to State control chiefly on the ground of expense and risk involved.

WHY CANNOT ANIMALS TALK?

The answer to this question depends on what is really meant. We know that many animals can express something of what they feel to each other and to us. The different cries of a baby are a kind of talk; so are the differences in the sounds a dog makes.

But as we usually mean the word "talk," animals cannot talk. Even if they imitate our words, their talk is meaningless to them. The answer to the question why this is so is that the brains of animals, even the cleverest, and such as may have lived all their lives in human company, and so have been educated as much as may be, are so vastly inferior to our brains that animals have not mind enough to enable them purposely to use special sounds with special meanings.

The throat, voice-box, tongue and mouth of an animal are in their way just as good as ours. Indeed, a dog's voice takes longer to tire than most men's voices. It is the nature of the brain of the dog that prevents him from talking. To talk as human beings, talk requires at least a little though perhaps not always very much, of the special powers which the human mind alone has, and which so far as the wonderful brain is concerned are connected with the great size and marvelous structure of one of its parts, with which no animal has anything worthy to compare.—Book of Knowledge.

PROFESSOR FALLS DOWN MINE SHAFT TO DEATH

The body of H. C. A. Smith, the Hackley School geology professor, who fell to his death into the Manitou copper, sulphur and iron mine shaft on Thursday, Oct. 28, while he was conducting a group of students on a field trip, has been recovered. Grappling hooks, let down by James Eaton and Bruin Polhemus, caught the body in a pool 125 feet underground.

Marks on the body indicated that death had come to Professor Smith before he struck the water, as a result of his fall against the walls of the corkscrew type shaft. The search was to have been abandoned to-night on the theory that the sulphur in the water had kept the body down in a fissure, from which it would never be dislodged. Divers had been sent into the shaft, and a boat had been lowered to the water, sixty-five feet below the surface, in the first attempts at recovering the body.

Professor Schmitt had gone to the copper mine shaft with a party of students of the Hackley School to make a study of mineral compositions. Several specimens of ore were examined by the students. Professor Schmitt went toward the mouth of the shaft, which had its opening on a hill, and leaned forward to grasp a particle of ore that protruded from a wall of the shaft. In one hand he held a lantern. Suddenly his foot slipped and he lost his balance, plunging downward through the shaft, which is a short distance from Peekskill, N. Y.

Professor Schmitt was sixty years old and unmarried. He was educated at Breslau and Griefswald, Germany, and came to America thirty years ago. Before joining the faculty of the Hackley School he taught at the West Newton School in Massachusetts. He had been a member of the Hackley faculty twenty years.

CHARLIE CHAPMAN'S COURAGE

—OR—

THE BOY WHO TOOK CARE OF HIS MOTHER

By WILLIAM WADE

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XIV.

Another Game of Gainful Brainwork.

Captain James Burke did not need much study of the matter to tell that somehow or other the youth had managed a "corner" in mules, before his arrival.

"By George, you worked a shrewd play here," said he to Charlie. "Even yet, I'll wager I could go out and offer the farmers about five dollars apiece under what you quote me for these animals."

Charlie nodded, realizing that this was true. But the other man had no intention of doing this, and Charlie guessed that he was only saying it to draw him out into argument over it.

"Well, captain, you could do it, but I think that most of the farmers around here are honest and that their word is as good as a gold bond. But, even at that, to tell you the truth, I have an option for only two weeks on these animals."

The captain laughed, as the youth frankly told this secret.

"Yes," continued Charlie, "you could wait a couple of weeks, or by this time it's only another week. But you'd lose valuable time, and besides I am planning to get ten dollars on every sale. That's not much profit for the planning and work I have done, now is it?"

The captain smiled at the earnest young fellow.

"Why, certainly it's all right. I am buying these animals under orders. It isn't taking a great profit from me, for I am paid anyway. And it is a good bargain at the price you have named. Take my advice, and always hold down your profits to reason, and you will continue to make them."

Charlie was relieved, for he had partly feared that his scheme would be considered taking advantage.

"And, as for my getting the options from the farmers away from you, I don't do that sort of business. You deliver the rest of these mules, and bring the number to the fifty that you say are ready. Then I'll take up my way for other districts, where I'll probably have to pay higher than here."

The work ended at last.

Black Nell did her share in rounding up the different animals, and helping to lead them to town.

But at last it was ended, the farmers had learned of Charlie's idea, and although a few of

them tried to raise the price after they knew who the buyer was, they did not succeed with the shrewd youngster.

"That there Chapman boy is a wonder," said one old fellow as Charlie had left his place, leading the last of the fifty. "But he spends too doggoned much time fussing around to ever be a good farmer. I don't believe in this yere academy business, and these yere fancy clothes for a farmer. I swan, a feller can't be two things ter onct."

His neighbor, who had come over to see the bargaining, stroked his chin whiskers, as he replied:

"Waal, mebbe it don't fit yer ideer of a farmer. But I calc'late that thar feller will be a rich man when you're still hagglin' over the price of oats and mules."

Charlie ended up his little deal in mules the gainer of a good five hundred dollars of clear profit.

His mother was pleased beyond measure. She advised that he put it into payment on the mortgage, and settle that much of the heavy debt.

But Charlie did not agree with her entirely.

"No, mother, dear, I believe that it is a good thing to save money. But the best way to do it is to make more, with what you have. And so I'm going to pay off just half of this amount to the judge on that mortgage, and the remainder of two hundred and fifty dollars I am going to put in the savings bank for future use."

The lad's mother had misgivings. She did not think it a good thing to risk so much money in a future investment, but wanted to settle it off as soon as she could.

However, she knew that Charlie had managed this neat deal already without her help or advice, except the loan of the two hundred from the bank.

And so she left him to his own devices.

Charlie was a good one to leave that way, for with all his farm work he ever kept his eye out for new ventures and bargains.

The next thing that came his way was in an altogether different line of work.

In one of the New York papers Charlie read how the price of eggs was soaring higher all the time.

"That's surely funny," said the lad to Hezekiah, as they talked it over. "We could sell eggs at fifteen cents a dozen here and make a profit. But these city folks are paying thirty-five and forty, and then the prices go up. I believe I'll try a little trick of my own."

Thereupon he sat down and wrote ten letters.

Each one was addressed to the president of a big clubhouse in New York city, the names of which he had learned from one of the magazine articles.

In each letter Charlie offered to provide eggs, fresh in lots every day, at a price of thirty cents a dozen in as many lots as the clubhouses would want.

Before two days had passed the stewards of every club had written him to send sample orders of five dozen to each one of them, at his quoted rate.

(To be continued)

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES.

TURKEY HUNT IN MIDOCEAN

A turkey hunt in midocean last Tuesday aboard the Scandinavian-American liner United States, in November 21 from Copenhagen, provided a lot of fun for more than an hour for the 820 passengers in three classes. There were originally seventy-five birds, all intended for a Thanksgiving feast aboard the liner, and it is suspected that some mischievous Danish boys gave them their liberty. All but three of the birds were restored to their crates. Two big gobblers were drowned near the ship, and another flew toward a vessel several miles off, but fell short of the goal by a ship's length and spent Thanksgiving with Skipper Davy Jones.

SAILOR DROWNS IN OIL

Almost exhausted by twenty-four hours' continuous work at the pumps, the crew of the Standard Oil ship De Soto, refused to desist when the vessel locked at Bayonne the other night until they had recovered the body of one of their number.

Severin Hansen, forty-five of Newark, who had been a member of the crew for the past four years, was drowned when he fell into one of the tanks of oil the other night. The crew, working in relays, began to pump the oil from the tank. They expected to empty it in the hope to recover Hansen's body.

PRUNE HOOTCH IN SING SING

Roy Hill, sergeant of the guard of Sing Sing, has been delegated, it was learned to keep close tabs on prunes used in the prison so the prisoners cannot make liquor of them. Hill is virtually the "Prohibition enforcement agent" of the prison.

Warden Lawes has taken this precaution because a couple of quarts of prune juice were found hidden away and fermenting near the kitchen. Attendants suspected prisoners were making spirituous beverage and confiscated the juice. The hootch makers did not get a chance to quench their thirst.

Prunes are served on an average of twice a week and between 8,000 and 10,000 are used for one meal.

ANDY KEPT HIS ROLL

Opportunity knocks at some time at every man's door, but frequently a golden key is needed, says Work. And to the man who has spent all he has received, who lacks the golden key, the door won't open. So opportunity knocks in vain and goes elsewhere. There is a tide in the affairs of men which taken at the flood—

Some years ago we had a shipping clerk named Andy. He did not get very much money in the pay envelope that came to him on Friday night. But unlike some of those who received much more Andy hung on to part of his. His roll never

burned a hole in his pocket; he lacked the spending itch.

Finally, we had a difference of opinion and Andy went. And his roll went—into the purchase of a team of horses and a secondhand truck. He came for our trucking business and got it. He asked for the trucking business of other firms in the neighborhood and got it. Soon he needed another truck—and he got that. Soon some of Andy's customers, including ourselves, put in their own motorized service. Andy motorized his service to take care of the overflow and of the new customers who kept coming to him.

To-day he has five motor trucks and he still has his roll. America is still the land of opportunity to the man who will work and save. The simplest, safest, and easiest method of saving is through the purchase of Government savings securities. You do not need to have asbestos pockets if you put a part of what you earn into War Savings Stamps each week. When opportunity knocks, you will have the golden key which will open the door to a bigger and brighter future.

"THE WAY TO BECOME A MOVING PICTURE ACTRESS" is in "Moving Picture Stories," No. 326. Get a copy. Price 7 cents; postage free. HARRY E. WOLFF, 166 W. 23rd St., N. Y.

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By ARTHUR WILLIAM ANDREEN

FRANK TOUSEY, Pub., 168 W. 23d St., N. Y.

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THE SCARER SCARED

By John Sherman

"I say, Rich, I've struck it!"

"Struck what, Ed?" I asked, hauling in my line and putting a fresh bait on my hook.

"Why, a racket, to be sure!"

"A racket! Well, fire away. What is it?"

"You know old Dave Johnson?"

"The old miser down at the crossroads?"

"The very same."

"Yes, but what of him? What has he to do with the racket?"

"Strictly speaking, nothing; indirectly, considerable. You see, the old fellow turned his ties up——"

"What! You don't mean to say Old Dave is dead?"

"I should rather say the old chap has passed in his last check. But to go on with the racket I was about to propose. As I was saying, the old fellow keeled toes up this afternoon and was laid out by the neighbors, and all the preparations necessary to his burial attended to; and tonight he will calmly repose in his coffin instead of, as formerly, upon a mattress of straw. Now, Fritz Klein, Pat O'Leary and Old Pete—O'Leary's nigger—have been engaged to watch with the corpse, and it has occurred to me that it will afford us more sport to give them a good scare than we have known since our arrival in S——. My plan is that we provide ourselves with a sheet, and go down to the crossroads a little before midnight, and, throwing the sheet over one of us, steal into the house.

"I will act in the role of ghost, and while I station myself beside the coffin to personate Old Dave's spook, you can secrete yourself under it, and watch the fun go on.

"O'Leary will be sure to take along a generous supply of the 'ould craythure,' and as our other two friends, Fritz and Old Pete, are not at all bashful about taking a 'drop' now and then, by twelve o'clock they'll be gloriously drunk. What do you say, old boy?"

I was about assenting, only two willing to take an active part in any racket that promised ever so little fun, so that the continued monotony of the every-day life to which I had been subjected since my arrival in S—— was broken in upon by one ray of sunshine, when a slight rustle in the shrubbery behind us caused us to glance over our shoulders.

"What was it?" I asked.

"The wind moving the underbrush, I guess," said Ed; and rising from our mossy seats, we at once proceeded to wind up our lines, preparatory to leaving for home.

For three consecutive hours we had been sitting there upon the mossy bank of that picturesque rivulet, which, aside from its picturesqueness, had no other attractions, being quite free of any of the finny species, a fact I had proven by assiduous application in the angler's art, but without once having elicited so much as the slightest nibble from any aquatic life that may have inhabited the limpid waters, and this a fair

sample of the numerous consecutive weeks, it will not seem so very surprising that I was quite willing to take a hand in the racket in question.

The old house at the crossroads in which Old Dave Johnson had lived for years in absolute seclusion was a low, one-story house, with two rooms in front and a long porch extending from the rear.

It was in one of the front rooms that the coffin containing the mortal remains of the defunct miser had been placed, resting upon two stools, and the pall thrown over the gloomy-looking box swept to the floor.

At the appointed time, Ed and I were standing in a clump of shrubbery beneath the window of the old house, through which a feeble light shone.

As we cautiously peeped in through the open window, the trio of watchers were sitting comfortably around a small table at the further end of the room, engaged in a game of cards, a jug of whisky sitting upon the floor beside them, with the requisite number of glasses resting upon a stool, and, as we had imagined would be the case, the three inebriates were in a state of semi-intoxication.

"I say, frinds," said O'Leary, between interrupted puffs at a strong clay pipe, and he straightened himself back in his seat, and thrust his thumbs deep into the armholes of his vest—"I say, frinds, did it iver occur to yees that the—hic—sperrit av the defunct iver hovers about the mortal body? Has it occurred to yees this evenin', while yees have been sittin' here in the solemn prisince av the—hic—did, that the sperrit av Old Dave Johnson, reposin' there in his coffin, so white an' silent, mav, at this very moment, be hoverin' about the room?"

"Oh, Lor'!" gasped Peter, rolling his eyes heavenward, and glancing over toward the pall-covered coffin.

"By goodness, no!" exploded Klein, in hushed accents, also casting a furtive glance that way.

"Now, yees naden't go to getting frightening, me frinds; for, though it has been said that the sperrit iver hovers about the defunct body, it's meself that niver belaved a word av it to be throe. But be that as it may, should the ghost av the did ould sinner slapin' there in his coffin appear to me this blissed noight, divil a bit would it frighten me. I'd ax him would he have a drap av the crathure, an' it's himself that would niver rafuse, at all, at all!"

Glancing at his two companions from under his eyebrows, to note the effect of his words upon them, an intensely guttural "Ha, ha, ha!" escaped him, and with an ostentatious twirl with his thumb, O'Leary dealt the cards.

A moment later the game held the trio in the embrace of the pleasurable excitement it afforded them, for the time driving all thoughts of dead men and spooks from their whisky-muddled brains.

"Now's our time, Rich!" whispered Ed.

Stealthily Ed drew himself through the window into the room, and, wrapped in the sheet, crouched down in the shadow of the coffin, while I, following close at his heels, secreted myself beneath the somber folds of the pall.

Suddenly the musty old time-piece on the mantel began a doleful whirring, preparatory to striking twelve.

The players sprang to their feet.

"Ho, ho, ho!" laughed O'Leary, a low, rumbling laugh. "Ho, ho, ho! It's only the clock, to be sure!"

With measured distinctness the midnight hour was struck.

A deeply sepulchral groan issued from Ed's throat.

Again the trio arose with anything but dignified alacrity to their feet.

"Bress de Lor'!" moaned Pete, from between his chattering teeth, rolling his white orbs heavenward.

"Vot vos dot?" interrogated Fritz, in a semi-whisper.

"I don't know. Sure, it's meself thet's entoirly in the dark," replied O'Leary, casting furtive glances about.

Again that groan, so terribly suggestive of tombs, of dead men's bones, and spooks, and of anything horrible appertaining to the supernatural, and gradually Ed rose to his feet.

"Howly Virgin!" gasped O'Leary, staring upon the supposed ghost of the defunct miser with mouth agape, nostrils expanded, and with eyes starting from their sockets.

"Donner und blitzen! id iss a khost!" ejaculated Fritz.

"May de good Lor' sabe dis yere nig!" groaned Pete, steadying himself upon his pins by leaning heavily upon the table, the while rolling his eyes in a most ludicrous manner, and the kinks actually came out of his wool, leaving it standing out from his head, and the shiny black of his ebony face gradually faded to a sickly, grayish hue.

A third groan, and Ed slowly extended his sheet-draped hand toward the frightened trio.

With a howl of mortal terror O'Leary disappeared through the door, closely followed by the Dutchman.

But Pete, poor fellow, too thoroughly frightened to run, still clung to the table for support, his eyes rolling, his teeth chattering, and his knees striking together as though suddenly stricken with a violent fit of ague.

Slowly Ed glided across the floor, and resting his hands upon the table, stood glaring the half-frightened-to-death darky full in the face.

"O good Massa Ghost, do go 'way. Fo' de good Lor's sake lef dis yere nigger 'lone!" pleaded Pete, in a voice tremulous with the agony of extreme terror.

Ed had the while been leaning further over the table, until by the time the last word fell from Pete's quivering lips their faces were brought almost in contact.

"Ba-a-a-ah!" blared Ed, in thundering accents. The effect was like magic.

With a bound quick as lightning, Pete turned a complete back-somersault, landing upon his feet near one of the rear windows, a feat that would have done credit to the most expert acrobat, one last glance at the terrible object in white; a stunning crash of window-glass, and he had disappeared through the window, taking sash and all as he went.

A splash closely following his unceremonious exit told us as plainly as words could have done that he had struck a landing—a hogshead of stagnant water settled down in the ground beneath the window.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Ed, throwing aside the sheet.

"But, Ed," I asked, when at length I could articulate a word, "haven't we got ourselves in a scrape? Who's going to watch with the dead?"

Ed looked perplexed.

"I never thought of that!"

I laughed.

"Never mind," I said, seating myself comfortably back in an easy-chair. "Have a cigar."

Scarcely had we seated ourselves, with our minds fully made up to pass the remainder of the night with the deceased, and were enjoying our cigars, when a slight movement in the direction of the coffin caused us to glance that way.

To our horror and utter dismay, the coffin lid was being gradually raised.

"Great Jove!" I gasped, springing to my feet.

By this time the lid had been thrown back, and the face of the dead rose slowly before our horrified vision, a face so dreadful in its awful ghastliness that for a moment we stood as though frozen to the spot.

"Go! leave me to myself, sacrilegious wretches! How have you dared to conduct yourself thus in the presence of the dead!"

The voice was undoubtedly the voice of the dead, so terribly intense was it in its deeply sepulchral tones, and the long, bony, index finger pointed to the door.

It was only a moment we stood inert in the awful presence of the suddenly animated corpse, for the next instant the dead awful thing began to lift itself from the coffin, still wrapped in its winding sheet, as though intent upon ejecting us by force.

With one desperate effort we roused ourselves to a full realization of our appalling situation, and, bounding to the door, rushed forth and away in the Stygian darkness of the night.

"Where is father, Bert?" asked Ed of his younger brother, when we had gained his home, still white and trembling from our recent fright.

A suppressed smile wreathed Bert's face.

"He's watching with the body of Mr. David Johnson, I suppose, since you have returned, and I guess sis'll be mad though, when she finds pa's used all her pearl to paint his face to-night."

We began to smell a rat.

Ed, I knew, was but a chip of the old block, and it occurred to me that his father had overheard us laying our plans; but it was he whom the rustle of the bushes had nearly betrayed to us as we were about leaving the bank of the stream on the preceding afternoon, and had turned the game we had so successfully played on O'Leary, Klein and Pete with as great success upon ourselves, being enabled to do so from the fact that Old Dave's body had not been placed in the coffin as we and even our trio of friends had believed, but had been laid out in the adjoining room; and my surmises were afterwards verified.

In the Siamese waters there are found fish which seem to be born to fight, for they certainly lose no opportunity to get into a "scrap." The natives train them for this purpose as cocks are trained in some other countries. Gambling on results is a favorite pastime.

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, DECEMBER 22, 1920.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST

TO HELP EMPLOYEES SAVE

To assist its 33,231 employees acquire the saving habit, the Western Electric Company has announced a plan under which employees may have a designated amount taken from their wages each week or month and deposited in a bank of their choosing by the company.

Employees may start or cancel the arrangement at any time. They may increase or reduce the amount. The banking accounts will at all times be strictly within the employees personal control.

WRIGGLES HIMSELF AFIRE

Pedro Sacherelli, a boy in the eighth grade in the Little Falls, N. Y., high school, was sitting at his desk, wriggling as boys do. Another boy, sitting near him, saw a column of smoke ascending along Pedro's backbone, and circling toward the ceiling. A quick look revealed the fact that matches in Pedro's pocket had been rubbed violently enough to set them on fire.

Other pupils and the teacher jumped to the rescue, and Pedro's sweater was jerked off, the fire beat out and the small boy returned to his seat. A considerable hole was burned through Pedro's clothes, and he was not hurt, though the fire extinguishers shook him up considerably.

SUPPLIES THE WORLD WITH COCAINE

The most profitable agricultural product of Bolivia is the coca plant, from which the anesthetic cocaine is derived. The world depends mainly for its supplies of coca leaves from that South American country.

The Bolivian natives commonly chew it for its narcotic effect. It enables the Indian burden bearer to go without food for a long time, and to work long stretches without rest. Unfortunately, its continued use is injurious to the nervous system, and is supposed to have much to do with the degeneration of the native race of the Bolivian plateau.

The coca plant is a shrub three or four feet high. Its leaves are of an oval shape and light green. The shrub is grown on terraces, built

up on the hillsides. These terraces are about ten inches wide, and are protected by ramparts of earth faced with stones or cement. The terracing prevents the heavy rains from washing the whole plantation down the mountainside, also holds the moisture about the roots of plants.

Young shoots are grown under a cover of banana leaves, and when sufficiently large are transplanted to the terraces. The plant begins bearing when two years old. After the leaves are picked they are dried in the sun on a floor made of slabs of slate. They are then pressed into bales weighing 50 pounds each, and wrapped in banana leaves and burlap to protect them against weather and rough handling, and carried to La Paz by mules. In La Paz they are at present worth 47 cents gold per pound.

Bolivia manufactures no cocaine. The leaves are exported to other countries for the extraction of that active principle.

LAUGHS

From a notice in a Cornish church: "The preacher for next Sunday will be found hanging in the church porch on Saturday."

Griggs—Funny how much easier you can rile a thin person than a fat one. Briggs—Not at all. It takes a fat person longer to get mad clear through.

Harry's mother took him to a dentist one day to have several of his teeth extracted. "Never mind, my boy," said the dentist, "they will soon grow in again." "W-will they g-grow in a-again before d-dinner?" sobbed the little fellow.

Critic (as the composer plays his last piece)—Very fine, indeed. But what is that passage which makes the cold chills run down the back? Composer—That is where the wanderer has the hotel bill brought to him.

"I cannot understand," wrote the college boy, "why you call yourself a kind father. For three weeks I've had no check from you. Pray, what sort of kindness do you call that?" And the father wrote back: "Unremitting kindness."

Struggling Minister—There was a stranger in church to-day. Wife—What did he look like? "I did not see him." "Then how do you know there was a stranger among the congregation?" "I found a good quarter in the contribution box."

Miss Uptodate at last found an unengaged afternoon and went to the ball game. She entered the grand stand with her escort in a leisurely way and, after looking about her, glanced at the players in practice. "Why, what dreadful creatures!" she exclaimed. "They are wearing exactly the same cut of uniform as last year when I was here."

ITEMS OF GENERAL INTEREST

TO MAKE A HOLE IN GLASS

To make a hole in glass make a circle of clay or cement rather larger than the intended hole; pour some kerosene into the cup thus formed, ignite it, place the plate upon a moderately hard support, and with a stick rather smaller than the hole required and a hammer strike a rather sharp blow. This will leave a rough-edged hole, which may be smoothed with a file. Cold water is said to answer even better than a blow.

HARVEST OF SUNFLOWERS

Millions of sunflowers fell before the knives of the mowers this fall in the most gorgeous crop ever harvested in Western Canada.

Immense areas were planted to this new silage product. Fields of twenty and fifty acres were common, and fifty acres of sunflowers, closely ranked, standing twelve and fifteen feet high, were spectacular beauty spots in a prairie landscape.

Cutting these flowering miniature forests might seem a difficult task, but the rapidly shuttling sawtoothed knives of mowing machines brought them tumbling to earth in golden windrows.

FASTS LONG TIME

After a hunger strike of twenty-two days, designed to force his daughter, a school teacher, to profess religion, the Rev. Joel Woolbridge, minister at Dermark, Kentucky, has broken his fast. The daughter, Della, refused to profess religion on the ground that she will not "espouse any cause she does not believe in."

In the closing days of the fast Woolbridge became so weak he had a cot brought into the church where he was conducting a revival and preached his sermons propped up with pillows. Miss Woolbridge left town to escape notoriety.

Woolbridge said he received a message from Christ to break his fast. He seems to be suffering no ill effects.

IS A STONE ALIVE?

The answer to this tremendous question depends on what we mean by alive. Animals and plants do certain things which no stones or rocks do. Stones take curious and regular forms, as in crystals and in the columns of the Giant's Causeway in Ireland. Crystals grow, and sometimes it looks as if little crystals grew from them; but they do not breathe, and they have not certain other powers which even the simplest and humblest of living things possess. So we must say that, in the strictest sense of the word, stones are not alive.

But that is very far indeed from being the whole answer to the question. It is a proved fact that the substances of which stones are made can help to build up the bodies of living creatures, and these bodies can be broken down into simpler chemicals and made into stones. This seems very curious, but it is true.—Book of knowledge.

STRAWBERRIES WEIGH 2 3-4 OZ. IN ALBERTA

R. A. McCluskey of Calgary, Alberta, stooped and fussed among the plants of his strawberry bed. He came up with a monster strawberry that could not have been forced into an ordinary goblet. For a rapt moment he regarded its red and luscious beauty. Then he ate it, a bite at a time, as he would an apple.

"When I was in the Yukon in 1911," said Mr. McCluskey, "I found the hills covered with wild strawberries. I marvelled at plants that could live through Yukon winters and produce fruit so prolifically and of such delicious flavor. I resented the fate that doomed these wonderful berries to waste their sweetness in an Arctic wilderness and crossed them with domestic varieties in my garden. The result has been a hybrid that is remarkably hardy and prolific and produces berries of a rich and piquant flavor that frequently weigh two and three-quarter ounces."

The wild strawberry that Mr. McCluskey domesticated has become widely disseminated throughout southern Alberta and has added to the fame of the region as a producer of small fruit. It was this type of berry that the Prince of Wales on his visit to Calgary pronounced the finest he ever had tasted. Mr. McCluskey picked 607 boxes of strawberries from a patch 25 by 120 feet this season. The price at which the berries sold was at the rate of \$2,000 an acre.

\$4000 SILVER LOOT DUG UP FROM CAVE

"Go to ———'s cottage, midway between Jamaica and Flushing. Walk 400 feet straight from the rear of the house. Then dig."

These instructions were received from an anonymous source, in a mysterious manner by Detective Eugene Fallon and James Kierman, of the Flushing police the other day.

The police officers were perplexed when they received the note, but they set out to follow the directions. After diligent effort they located the house. No one responded to their knocks.

They measured off the 400 feet from the rear of the house. At first nothing met their eye.

"I guess it's a joke," one decided, but the other noticed a section of earth which appeared to have been recently dug up. The detectives got down on their knees and commenced to burrow with their hands. After several minutes they uncovered a wooden door, which they lifted. It proved to be the roof of a neatly constructed cave, six feet deep.

Fallon jumped into the hole, and under another pile of earth uncovered an overcoat. He picked it up, and out came a great pile of silverware.

The detectives lugged their find back to the Flushing police station. There the coat and the silverware were identified as part of the loot taken from the residence of Craig Colgate, a banker, whose home at No. 11 Franklin place, Flushing, was robbed recently. The property was valued at \$4,000.

INTERESTING NEWS ARTICLES

THE MAN WHO SAVES

He erects a bulwark against sickness or adversity.

He builds a bridge to the better job.

He takes in hand a tool to grasp opportunity.

He sets up a ladder to climb in the world.

He gains control over money and things.

He trains himself for growing responsibility.

—The Gentlewoman.

MANY RATS KILLED

More than 6,000 rats have been killed in Corpus Cristi, Tex., to date, at an average cost of 5 cents per rat, Boy Scout headquarters, conducting the campaign against the rodents, announced here. Examination of the rats failed to show a single symptom of bubonic plague, it was said.

SUMATRA PROTECTS TIGERS

Tigers are protected in Sumatra, the reason being that one of the important industries of that country is the cultivation of an African palm. This palm was introduced several years ago, and the wild hogs so enjoyed its easily obtained fruits and so thrived on them that they increased and multiplied rapidly until they became a perfect pest. Now wild hogs are the favorite diet for Sumatran tigers, therefore the protection. But it looks like a dangerous experiment.

MIDSHIPMEN. "DRUNK," NOW FACE DISMISSAL

Running afoul of the Naval Academy regulations on intoxicants, two or more midshipmen face possible dismissal from the naval service. Recommendations in a number of cases of students who have been imbibing are now before the Navy Department for final action. Rear Admiral A. H. Searles, Superintendent of the academy, would not reveal the names.

Several of the students, it is said, have been allowed to resign in the last few days, but cases now pending before the department for final review are said to result from flagrant violations of regulations.

Report has it that at least two midshipmen were apprehended on the streets in such an intoxicated condition that it became necessary to remove them to their quarters on the Government reservation.

Naval Academy authorities admit that at least two midshipmen have been recommended for dismissal.

DOGS, CATS AND RATS ARE SCARCE IN BERLIN

One reason why for a long time it has not been safe to trust a dog out alone in Berlin has been disclosed in a police court proceeding in which a man named Peters was sent to jail for eighteen months for dog-stealing. It appeared by the evidence that his thefts had run from twenty to thirty dogs a day for months, and that most of his booty had been sold to provision dealers.

It is believed that dog-stealing has been fairly profitable to many persons, for dogs have disappeared rapidly from every part of the city. In times of extreme food scarcity during the war owners took care to keep their dogs on their own premises, knowing the risks of letting them run free.

They have not been so careful this year, and losses have piled up until the police were shamed into activity to run down the thieves.

Yet the arrest of Peters is the only one so far reported, and the disclosure at his trial that "hot dog" has literally defined some of the butchers' stocks probably will discourage the nauseating industry.

Berliners recall with mixed feelings that districts of the city which were overrun with cats in former times are now nearly bare of them; nor are rats so plentiful as might be expected in the circumstances.

BEATING SLOT MACHINES

"You would be surprised," said the telephone man, "to see the amount and variety of junk sorted from the nickel-in-the-slot machine telephones in New York city every month.

"Last month we had two small barrels of assorted coins, slugs and other things. There are various foreign coins, such as German 2 1-2 pfennig pieces. They may be about the size of a nickel, but they are of considerable less value. On the other hand, an occasional gold coin glitters forth from the dingy pile of iron and copper. When one of these comes along it helps to make up the deficiency, but in the long run of course we lose.

"Probably you know," continued the telephone man, "that some rural districts are equipped with what are known as farmer lines, that is a local service. Farmers are not noted for the great amount of ready cash they carry about with them; furthermore, it is inconvenient for persons in isolated districts to be always supplied with change. So arrangement is made with some local merchant who acts as a banker. He sells the farmer slugs which are the size and shape of a five-cent piece. Now it must be that a lot of men are drifting in from the towns every day and fetching along pocketfuls of these iron slugs, for we are constantly finding them.

"There is another interesting phase about this petty form of dishonesty. Of course you know that New York is a gum-chewing town and probably the habit has its mental effect, especially on the young. It isn't at all likely that a boy could chew gum all the way from the Bronx to the Battery every day and even up to lunch time without thinking after a while of something else to do with the gum. We sometimes find two pennies stuck together with chewing-gum and sometimes a wad of gum sandwiched between two pieces of tin. Then, of course, all the nickels in New York that have holes in them and those that have been chipped eventually find their way into pay station phones."

COLLEGE OWNS FOREST

Berea College, at the foot of the Cumberland Mountains, in Kentucky, has the unique distinction of owning two mountains, 4,000 acres of forest, its own sawmill, but never cutting a sound tree, writes Marie Dickore in the American Forestry Magazine. This wood is used for the college, for power, for heat and in the many cozy fireplaces in the dormitories and in the great open fireplace which delights every traveler who stops at Boone Tavern.

The sawmill, as well as the 4,000 acres of forest reserve, provides not only ample practical experience for the students, but also actual labor for those students who work for their education. The sawmill is operated by steam, and, like every other industry at Berea College, is run by students, who work at least two consecutive hours per day under the supervision of a superintendent of labor, who in turn is responsible to the Dean of Labor.

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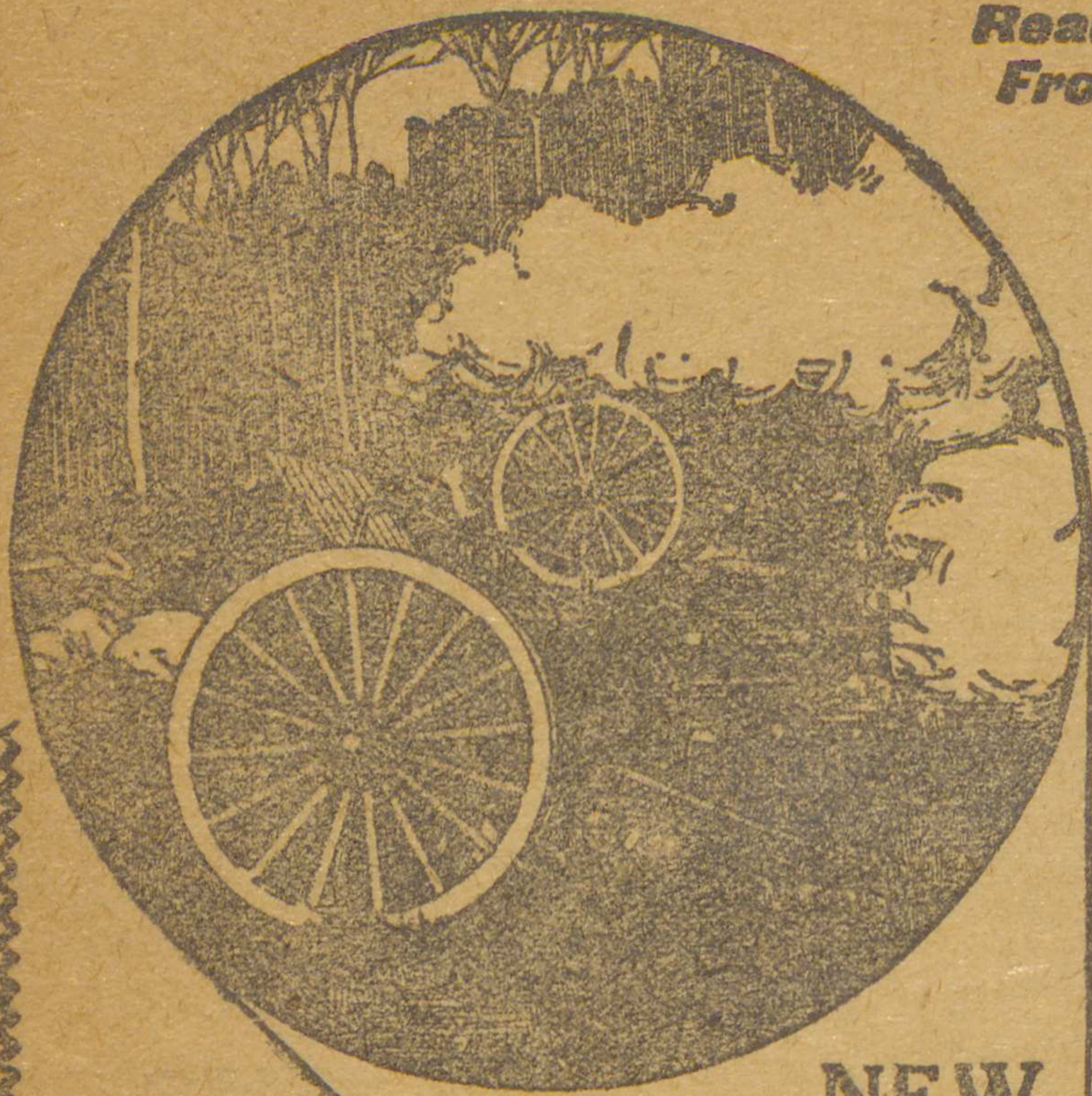
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